DISSENT

GÜNTER GRASS

Violence and Politics

Two Essays on Germany and Czechoslovakia

Nicola Chiaromonte

ON MODERN TYRANNY

A Critique of Western Intellectuals

Beverly Woodward

Nuremberg Law and U.S. Courts

IRVING HOWE
Nixon's Dream—
And Black Reality

JERVIS ANDERSON
Styron and His
Black Critics

RALPH GOLDMAN
Confrontation
At S.F. State

JOSEPH BUTTINGER
Toward Peace
At Paris?

HENRY PACHTER
Teaching
Negro History

NORMAN HILL
On Wilkins
And Innis

Homage to NORMAN THOMAS

MARCH-APRIL 1969 $1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GÜNTER GRASS contributed an excerpt from his play *The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising* to the July–August 1966 DISSENT; his "Open Letter to Kiesinger" appeared in our January–February 1967 issue.

BEVERLY WOODWARD teaches philosophy and political science at Southeastern Massachusetts Technological Institute. She is a doctoral candidate at the New School for Social Research and currently at work on a dissertation entitled "Ethical Ambiguity and Political Action."

NICOLA CHIAROMONTE, essayist and drama critic, lives in Rome. He is co-editor, with Ignazio Silone, of the monthly *Tempo Presente*, and has also contributed to several American periodicals. His new book *An Age of Bad Faith* will be published shortly in the U.S. by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

JERVIS ANDERSON, a young black writer, has contributed to *Commentary*, the *New York Times*, and other publications; he is currently on the staff of the *New Yorker*. His article "Black Writing: The Other Side" appeared in our May–June 1968 issue.

RALPH M. GOLDMAN, Professor of Political Science at San Francisco State College, is author of *The Democratic Party in American Politics*, co-author of *Politics of National Party Conventions*, and co-editor of the five-volume *Presidential Nominating Politics in 1952*. He is currently pursuing research in the field of international conflict and arms control. At the College, he has served as Director of the Institute for Research on International Behavior and as Associate Dean for Faculty Research.

GERALD DWORKIN is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at M.I.T. He received his Ph.D. at Berkeley and is well acquainted with the Bay area. His major interests are moral and political philosophy.

GEORGE ECKSTEIN, a frequent reviewer of books and movies for DISSENT, who lives in New York, reports on the economic, cultural, and social U.S. scene for *Gewerkschaftliche Monatshefte*, the theoretical journal of the West German trade unions.

MULFORD Q. SIBLEY is currently Professor of Political Science at the University of Minnesota. He has written widely on the political theory of pacifism, and has been active in the peace and socialist movements for many years.

LEON V. SIGAL is a tutor in Government and Social Studies at Harvard.

DISSENT issued March 1, 1969, is published bimonthly, January-February, March-April, May-June, July-August, September-October, November-December, by Dissent Publishing Corporation, 509 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. Subscriptions: $6.00 for one year; $10.00 for two years; $3.50 for students for one year; foreign subscriptions, including Canada, add $1.00 mailing costs per year. All payments from foreign countries must be made by United States money orders or checks payable in United States currency. Single copy, $1.00. For special rates on bulk orders from organizations, teachers, etc., write directly to DISSENT. For information on newsstand and bookstore distribution write to: Eastern News Co., 155 West Fifteenth Street, New York, N.Y. 10001.

© 1969, by Dissent Publishing Corporation. Permission to reprint any article must be obtained from the publishers. • Manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. • Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. • Volume XVI, Number 2 (Whole No. 69).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DISSENT

MARCH–APRIL 1969

DISSENT is a journal devoted to radical ideas and the values of socialism and democracy. It seeks to serve as a forum for writers devoted to these ideas and values, while also welcoming a wide variety of other opinions. Each writer speaks for himself; there is no effort made to exact editorial consensus or uniformity.

EDITOR: Irving Howe

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Joseph Buttinger, Lewis Coser, Joseph Clark, Alexander Erlich, Emanuel Geltman, Michael Harrington, Tom Kahn, Arnold Kaufman, Jeremy Larner, Norman Mailer, Henry Pachter, Stanley Plastrik, Jack Rader, Bernard Rosenberg, Bayard Rustin, Meyer Schapiro, Ben B. Seligman, David Spitz, Michael Walzer, Dennis H. Wrong

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:

Lionel Abel, Stanley Diamond, Erich Fromm, Paul Goodman, Murray Hausknecht, Paul Jacobs, Frank Marquart, Martin Peretz, Harold Rosenberg, Herman Singer, Stephan Thernstrom

MANAGING EDITOR:
Edith Tarcov

COMMENTS AND OPINIONS

HOMAGE TO NORMAN THOMAS —*by A. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin, and Michael Harrington* 99

NIXON'S DREAM—AND BLACK REALITY —*by Irving Howe* 101

TOWARD PEACE AT PARIS? —*by Joseph Buttinger* 108

ROY INNES VS. ROY WILKINS —*by Norman Hill* 113

THE UNION AND THE PROFESSORS —*by Murray Hausknecht* 115

A MODEST PROPOSAL: SHOULD THE FORD FOUNDATION BE DECENTRALIZED? —*by an Observer* 118

ARTICLES

TWO—*by Günter Grass*
(1) VIOLENCE REHABILITATED 119
(2) CZECHOSLOVAKIA 1968 124

NUREMBERG LAW AND U.S. COURTS —*by Beverly Woodward* 128

ON MODERN TYRANNY: A CRITIQUE OF WESTERN INTELLECTUALS —*by Nicola Chiaromonte* 137

TEACHING NEGRO HISTORY —*by Henry Pachter* 151

STYRON AND HIS BLACK CRITICS —*by Jervis Anderson* 157

CONFRONTATION AT SAN FRANCISCO STATE —*by Ralph M. Goldman* 167

NOTEBOOK

THE HIPPIES: PERMANENT REVOLUTION? —by *Gerald Dworkin* 180

APOCALYPTIC WEEKEND —*by George Eckstein* 183

BOOKS

A HISTORY OF U.S. PACIFISM —*by Mulford Q. Sibley* 185

U.S. INTERVENTIONISM—*by Leon V. Sigal* 188

MARTYRS OF YESTERDAY—*by Joseph Clark* 190

LETTERS

192

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Homage to Norman Thomas

November 20, 1884–December 19, 1969

A. Philip Randolph

Throughout my life I have drawn much of my inspiration as a socialist from Norman Thomas. I learned from him, as well as from Eugene Victor Debs, that the struggle for racial justice is organically tied to the struggle for political and economic justice.

Over the years, Thomas was one of the people that I could always depend upon in times of great stress. During the building of The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters I often sought his advice, and he consistently responded with counsel that was both practical and humane.

Thomas was the symbol of the total American man. Whether he was fighting to liberate children from the harshness of the sweatshops or to obtain justice for Sacco and Vanzetti, whether he was striving to protect and extend civil liberties or to further the growth of those two great and interdependent movements for social justice—the civil rights and labor movements—Norman Thomas was always the man on whom all segments of the American population could depend.

Michael Harrington

In many ways Thomas's refusal of any doctrinaire codification of socialism was one of his great strengths. I remember about ten years ago when he and I shared a platform at a DISSENT conference. I was not a true believer then but I could, and did, quote from the Marxist scriptures with scholastic gusto. Norman Thomas dispensed with his prepared remarks and spent his time challenging my conventional radical wisdom. Even at that time I suspected that he was right to counter my over-orthodoxy; now I am sure of it.

That tough-mindedness in Norman Thomas persisted courageously as he lay dying. Because I had come to the socialist movement via the *Catholic Worker* and he by the Protestant church, we often talked about religion. Even in his younger days as a pastor, he had been something of a non-conformist and he long ago abandoned his ministry. But he maintained a profound affection for his religious past and a very real interest in the latest theological developments. Yet he had an almost conservative suspicion about some of the newer, symbolic interpretations of Christianity (so do I). He would not go back to the old, traditional faith, but then neither would he take consola-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion from biblical metaphors. As I understood him, he seemed to feel that God was in his heaven, or was not, and if the latter were true there was not much point in trying to invent sentimental substitutes for him.

That was an extremely stoic attitude for a man who knew that he was dying. At the end, Norman Thomas's mind was clear and perceptive, but his body was assaulted by countless infirmities of sickness and age. Yet he was so true to his intellectual convictions that he refused to create any religious consolations for himself. He was as undogmatic, and as deeply serious, on this count as he was in his socialist convictions. It was, to my mind, an act of spiritual and intellectual bravery.

There are those to the Right of Norman Thomas who would like to forget that he was committed to the very end to a socialist reconstruction of society. There are those on the Left who cannot understand his intolerance of slogans and blueprints. As I knew him, he lived the life of the spirit dangerously for he opened himself up to all the confusions and ambiguities of this world, yet never lost his vision of an entirely new order of things.

He was a socialist.

Bayard Rustin

For over forty years Norman Thomas was one of the leaders in the struggle for social justice in America. To every project to end racial discrimination and economic inequality he gave counsel, funds, and particularly his personal commitment.

When the Communist party deserted the Scottsboro boys in their struggle, Thomas was one of those who stepped in and saw the case through to the Supreme Court. He was also among the few whites who gave vigorous support to the 1941 March on Washington and was in the forefront of the war-time effort to obtain the Fair Employment Practices Committee. In 1948, he was one of the first people to support A. Philip Randolph in the fight to eliminate discrimination in the armed forces.

Long before the social upsurge that began in 1955 around the school boycott, the sit-ins, and the Montgomery bus protest, Thomas, out of his socialist background, had been consistently working for equality on an even more profound level. He played a major role in the establishment of the CIO which has brought hundreds of thousands of black people out of the lumpenproletariat and into the working class.

Many of the things he advocated forty years ago have not yet been achieved. We do not yet have free education and free medical care for everybody, full employment, and family allowances. Many of our citizens in this affluent country still suffer from degrading poverty. The real way to do honor to Norman Thomas is to join in the struggle to establish the still unachieved ideas to which he dedicated his life.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Irving Howe

Nixon's Dream—and Black Reality

TRYING TO UNDERSTAND the world we live in can drive a man out of his mind. The different levels of public life we can more or less make out. It's the connections among them that are hard to grasp. Here are a few notes on the current political situation in the U.S., together with notes on some attendant but distinct problems.

• *The main goal of the Nixon Administration is* the restoration of social order —social peace—in the United States. *How this is to be achieved—by blunt oppression, meliorist legislation, or both—the Nixon people don't yet know. They are conservatives, not reactionaries; they respond to perceived situations, not ideological notions. They want the good life to continue for the American middle class; the U.S. to remain a major, if not world-dominating, power; and a decline in turmoil, violence, and protest.*

Their hope for a new social equilibrium derives, in their view, from the following:

1) Old-fashioned faith in the capitalist system, which leads them to try enlarging the socio-economic space allowed to free enterprise as a way of coping with the social problems created by free enterprise. Or: a policy of offering large-scale government incentives to corporations so that *they* will be able to assume social responsibilities at an accustomed profit.

2) Right-wing Keynesianism, that is, continuing a version of welfare-state economics and deficit financing, while cutting "marginal" social programs (antipoverty). The New Deal, it is assumed by the Nixon people, is here to stay; it is a *second New Deal*, a further expansion of welfare statism, that they wish to resist.

3) Still, the Nixon people recognize the need for some innovation, if only because that may be the one way of re-establishing a social equilibrium. Nixon isn't Goldwater; he wants a "modern" government—a welfare state responsive to the welfare of business and the middle class, but also responsive enough to those at the bottom so as to prevent too costly a disruption of "normal" life in this country. The result will be some changes in the welfare system, family allowances, etc., which can be justified on the ground of efficiency.

4) Even to approach these goals, the Administration will have to try to end the Vietnam War—or what seems more immediately possible, to gain a tacit understanding with the Communists for a gradual de-escalation of the fighting. Negotiations in Paris could then drag on, casualties be diminished, public attention diverted. A major concern here is to minimize the domestic repercussions of the Vietnam War, thereby enabling either a slow disentanglement or a limited continuation.

Meanwhile all elements of the "Establishment" seem to agree that a less blatantly interventionist foreign policy is called for. There is much stress on the *limits*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of U.S. power in the world today: having the ability to blow up the world doesn't mean you necessarily can tell every small country what to do.

Nevertheless, the U.S. remains a world power—as it would remain, no matter who became President. That means the constant possibility (danger) of new crisis, as in the Middle East, new interventions and local wars. . . . Neo-isolation is, in its more extreme forms, a fantasy.

5) There will be an effort to establish an "era of good feeling" based on a moderate-conservative ideology. "Black capitalism" will be indulged, partly to conciliate militants and partly to avoid the costs and fears of integration.

• *The possibility that the Nixon Administration can succeed at least partly in this goal is much increased by the fragmentation of American politics.*

1) This fragmentation appears, first of all, on the right. Everyone has underestimated the importance of the Wallace vote—everyone, I'd guess, but the canny operators who direct the Nixon strategy. Close to 10 million votes, 13 per cent of the total, the largest any third party ever won in the U.S.—is that a mere flash in the pan? For Nixon, Wallace represents both temptation and threat. The temptation is to woo Wallace's supporters with "law-&-order" appeals and thereby widen the popular base of the Administration. The threat is that a right-wing third party may siphon away the votes of millions of ideological Republicans who, adoring Goldwater, accepted Nixon as lesser evil. The relationship of the Wallace movement to Nixon Republicanism is somewhat like that of the New Left to Democratic liberalism—though Wallace has, of course, far more popular support than the New Left.

2) When significant enough, third parties in the U.S. have usually been absorbed into one or another of the major parties, thereby accelerating a realignment in political relationships. The LaFollette insurgency of the twenties helped prepare the way for the New Deal of the thirties. My guess is that the Wallace movement won't easily be absorbed in a similar way—first, because its mass base is regional, a Southern racism as persistent as it is irrational; second, because the social disorder in the Northern cities that alienated plebeian and lower-middle-class whites, even tempting some of them to vote for Wallace, is likely to continue for some time.

3) Political fragmentation is most visible on the liberal-left. Before and during the election there was already a fissure between the established domestic-welfare coalition, resting mainly on the unions but drawing heavy support from Negro voters, and the "conscience constituency," middle-class in composition, campus-oriented, concerned mainly with issues like the Vietnam War, foreign policy in general, and social (as distinct from merely economic) problems at home.

4) The support of blue-collar workers for Democratic Presidential candidates has, in any case, been steadily declining—from 78 per cent for Truman in 1948 to between 50 and 65 per cent between 1952 and 1962. The only interruption in this downward trend occurred in 1964, when Goldwater managed to persuade the workers he was a direct threat to their security.

5) In 1968 the appeal to class interest, so urgently directed to the workers by the union leadership during the last few weeks of the election, was reasonably successful. The percentage of working-class support for Wallace went down from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

21 to 15 in the month before the election, so that finally it wasn't much greater among blue-collar workers than any other segment of the population. Yet it also became clear that to achieve even this modest gain—that is, to prevent a major penetration into the working class by the reactionary Wallace movement—the unions had to make a considerable effort. Whether a similar penetration four years from now might be more successful is an open question.

I therefore do not entirely see the grounds for the joy expressed by those (e.g., Penn Kemble, National Secretary of the Socialist party, in a recent *Commentary* article) who believe "coalition politics" signifies little more than the present attachment of the unions to the Humphrey wing of the Democratic party. For one thing, what the election indicated was that if Robert Kennedy had lived and won the Democratic nomination, he would surely have beaten Nixon hands down: a point that ought to weigh with those who felt the defeat of Nixon to be an overriding necessity. For another, it must be granted that what the unions achieved, while not to be depreciated, was mainly to prevent a rout.

The significant long-range tendency is that a minority of the white working class seems prepared to drift away from its traditional attachment to Democratic-party liberalism. It is beginning to perceive race rather than economic interest as its major concern. Or more accurately: it is beginning to see itself as economically—and thereby socially—threatened by the blacks (sometimes, paradoxically, as socially and thereby economically threatened). To have persuaded some of the workers to come back to Hubert is not yet to cope with the basic problem raised by their earlier inclination to switch to Wallace.

6) The one major addition to Democratic strength over the last few decades has been the Negro vote. Despite the apocalyptic noises of Cleaver, Gregory, Innes, etc., some 90 per cent of the black vote remained Democratic. This hardly seems evidence of a large-scale revolutionary upsurge among the blacks. . . .

7) Still, as the Republicans patch together a coalition on the Right, developing a harmonious relationship with the conservative Southern Democrats, it may be that a sufficient shift of votes (and what the votes indicate) has already occurred to create a serious redistribution of political power. What matters in the U.S. is the margin of voting strength. Let enough workers break away from the Democrats in the North, let enough Negroes lapse into apathy, let enough support be picked up by Nixon from the South, and a new margin—thereby, a new relationship—is created.

8) A major problem, then, for the Democrats is the suburban middle class, attracted to Eugene McCarthy (at the moment, a bit of a crumbling hero) but now politically adrift. The professional middle class, though not large enough to be able to affect major political changes by itself, is nevertheless the fastest-growing segment of the population. It is not radical, but it desires social reform; it remains intensely disturbed by the Vietnam War. So long as the Democratic party remains under its present leadership, there isn't much prospect for winning the support of these people. Articulate, prosperous, sometimes organized, they sometimes overestimate their own power—about to the same extent, I'd guess, that trade union leaders underestimate it.

9) There is not much likelihood that this breach between the elements that once made up the New Deal-and-After Coalition will soon be healed. The re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sponsibility for the split rests *overwhelmingly* with the Johnson-Humphrey wing of the Democratic party, which led this country into a disastrous war, morally and politically indefensible. Any Left politics which does not begin with this fact must be a politics of irrelevance or evasion. To be sure, both sides—the unionists and the "conscience" group—have aggravated the split. The unions: by their reactionary stubbornness on Vietnam, by their insensitivity to new social problems, by their contempt for political "amateurs" and "eggheads." The middle-class reformers: by their self-righteous moralism and by their shameful ignorance of the conditions and needs of the working class.

10) In some cities there seems to be a new political confrontation. On one hand: moralistic WASPS, righteous Lindsay-Republicans, selling Nixon's "black capitalism" eyewash, and aligning themselves with "black militants" and some "radical" intellectuals. On the other side: lower-middle-class and working-class whites, drawing upon ethnic minorities and large portions of the Jewish population. Such a confrontation, if it comes into being, could only be disastrous for both the plebeian whites and the poor blacks.

Serious radicals and liberals will bend every effort to prevent such an alignment of forces. Their main political task will be to keep open channels of discussion, as well as to encourage at least partial cooperation between the elements of yesterday's left-liberal coalition.

II—New Moods in the Black World

IF I STRESSED before that most Negro voters continue to support the Democratic ticket, now I want to stress the extent to which significant groups of the Negroes have become "black." An articulate and visible segment of the Negroes, even if only a small minority, has turned to separatism. This is especially true among the youth. Politics, after all, signifies more than counting of noses; it signifies will, devotion, energy, intensity.

1) Within the Negro world there was a deep conflict in substance and style between Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. At least for now, Malcolm has won; his views have captured the imagination of black youth. And even that majority of Negroes which, continuing to vote Democratic, does not accept the black nationalist ideology, nevertheless seems willing to give the extremists a certain freedom of action within the ghettos. They like to see whitey harassed.

2) Economics may be at the heart of the Negro dilemma, and eventual solutions may be impossible without major economic measures leading to a redistribution of wealth. But economics is radically insufficient for understanding the new mood of many American Negroes. The impulse to assert identity, to assault white nerves, to declare black manhood—all this is simultaneously remarkable and pathetic, authentic and false. Right now it seems almost impossible to make distinctions: for one thing, no one involved in the assertion of blackness wants them. We do not yet have a serious formation of black nationhood, first because the prospect for such a nation within the U.S. is utterly hopeless, and second because the effort even to define what it might signify or how it might be realized has not been seriously undertaken. But there are clearly aspects of the drawing-together and drawing-apart of the blacks which—*if carried through over the next decade and accepted by a growing number of Negroes*—would signify the material, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

potential of nationhood. That it would also signify an unprecedented crisis for the U.S. need hardly be added.

3) Some—who can say how much?—of what is happening among the blacks is rhetoric, a competition in boastfulness, a nerve-wracked release of frustration. Anyone observing black students in California can't help recognizing that there is a certain plunge into collective irrationality and violence, as if the establishment of black pride is seen as requiring the refusal of rational calculation and measured interest.

4) A friend has suggested that it's as if the slave revolt that "should" have taken place 120 years ago were now being symbolically and belatedly enacted. That Negroes should still feel the need to shake off the remains of the slave psychology is of course a tragedy; that this country should have given them so much bitter cause for such a feeling is a moral outrage. It may be that we simply have to live through certain kinds of upheavals and enactments, while trying to minimize the extent to which they will prove to be self-defeating.

5) Most of the talk about "black capitalism" is simply rubbish, intended—consciously so—to evade the enormous social cost of abolishing the ghettos. Really to provide adequate housing, decent jobs, good education, and necessary social services to the American Negroes would cost an enormous amount of money—perhaps as much as that miserable Vietnam War. . . . This means appropriations by the federal government: there is no other way. It means heavier taxes on affluent whites: there is no other way. And if that isn't done, then "black capitalism" can only signify petty-bourgeois tinkering and trivial racketeering.

6) Petty-bourgeois tinkering will take the form of little businesses—dry-cleaning stores, a few small factories—run by blacks. (Won't they too exploit black workers and won't class conflict break out between the blacks too?) Trivial racketeering will occur as the result of the appearance of a black entrepreneurial-adventurist bureaucracy. Earlier predictions of the rise of a black bourgeoisie were premature, since for a genuine black bourgeoisie to have been created would have meant to allow at least some Negroes a significant entry into American corporate power. What is more likely now is the creation of a black bureaucracy, attached to school boards, antipoverty programs, urban administrations, and universities, clinging to the rhetoric of "black revolution" while easing into middle-class comforts. That such a development would hardly bring affluence to Harlem or Watts seems obvious. But it does raise important questions:

- **To what extent is this an inevitable development, part of the gradual absorption—with politics doing the work of economics—of managerial and quasi-intellectual blacks into the society? Since whites can batten off the welfare-state bureaucracy, why not blacks too?**
- **But with this difference: within the deprived and distraught black communities, these new black bureaucrats may command a degree of power and influence their white equivalents never could.**
- **At which point, however, will there be a revolt against this stratum of black bureaucrats within the ghetto? When will Negro parents discover that having black nationalist teachers in the schools does not necessarily solve the problems of their children as students or as future adults having to live in American society?**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

7) The trend toward localism—with some reality and more appearance of black control of black communities—seems irreversible. To say that having control of Harlem wouldn't solve its basic socio-economic problems is true. (If socialism can't be built in one country, poverty can't be eliminated in one neighborhood.) But the movement for localism stems from authentic needs. It should neither be brushed aside nor exalted into a cure-all. One consequence of such a development might be, within a few years, a new internal struggle within the black communities, leading to the appearance of more serious political leaders than today occupy public attention. The turn-over of leadership within the Negro world has been fantastic these last 10 or 15 years, and there is no reason to suppose it's going to stop with Roy Innes.

8) There is certain to be an increased exacerbation of conflict between blacks and whites, especially the poor on both sides who are pressed together in adjacent neighborhoods. *Any politics, no matter how well-intentioned or "radically" motivated, which pits poor black against plebeian white is a politics of disaster.*

9) There will be provocations on both sides. Some black behavior is certain to be self-defeating; but some, despite its revolutionary dress, may serve to bring the blacks certain gains within the bargaining system of the welfare state. It need surprise no one if many of the most vociferous "black militants" turn out to be absorbed quite nicely by the society they denounce—and not because they consciously betray their ideals, but because they have failed to analyze the reality of their situation.

10) All the while, deeper and more lasting socio-economic trends continue: above all, the slow absorption of an increasing number of Negroes into the work-force and thereby, at least partially, the society. The vast bulk of Negro workers will work not in cleaning stores set up by "black capitalism" but in plants owned by GM and Republic Steel. More and more blacks are being employed in offices, and more and more as semiprofessionals; the crush to find black teachers for "black studies" programs in the colleges is ferocious. Between 1½ and 2 million Negroes belong to trade unions; notable gains are being made in some of these unions by Negro caucuses seeking a larger share of paid jobs, local posts, etc.

Now, the absorption of Negroes into the work-force and thereby the socio-economic life of the nation doesn't necessarily or quickly make for the kind of "integration" radicals and liberals have traditionally wanted. For at least a time, you can have both old-fashioned segregation, especially in housing, and an increasing entry of Negroes into the work-force. Still, the fact remains that working and living in an industrial mass society, and gaining increased power and sophistication in local politics, is not really harmonious with the idea of separatism. Whatever the cultural and spiritual benefits of learning Swahili, they aren't likely to help many Negroes who, rightly or wrongly, want to "make it" in American society.

11) The ultimate question then becomes: Which will make itself sooner felt—the rise of a solid Negro working class and lower middle class, gaining in economic strength and political power, or the upsurge of declassed, chaotic, adventuristic elements? Which will make itself sooner felt—the underlying socio-economic processes or the surface political turmoil? And to what extent may the latter get in the way of—or speed up—the former?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

III—Cultural Revolution, Cultural Counterrevolution

A LARGE-SCALE TRANSFORMATION of values and life-styles is taking place among the young throughout the world. The full contours and significance of this transformation it is too soon to describe; but any politics which claims to be concerned with radical change and doesn't in some way try to cope with this new development is bound to run into trouble.

In barest outline, let me specify a few items in this transformation:

- *A willed and self-conscious generational break, defined as a clash between young and old more insistently than any similar phenomenon of recent times.*
- *A revolt against the drive to success and against the ethic of work. (The two are by no means the same, though part of the present confusion is that they are often taken to be the same.)*
- *Indifference to the "idea" as well as the established institutions of the working class—something radically new among new radicals.*
- *A strong inclination toward absolutist morality, sometimes absolutist moralism, by means of which elements of belief and feeling usually attached in the past to religion are now directed toward politics.*
- *A strong revulsion against traditional ideas concerning education, which in extreme instances takes the form of antirationalism.*
- *A conviction that liberal politics has failed, together with (at times) a distaste for the whole ethic of liberalism.*
- *A recurrent impulse toward utopian communitarianism, the effort to realize in the small those visions of the good society that have not been realized in the large.*
- *A feeling shared by many young people throughout the world that their generation comes to maturity at a point which signifies a major turning point in the history of Western culture.*

How are we going to work out a politics that takes account of these three levels or elements of social reality—first, the fragmentation of American politics; second, the new developments in the American Negro community; third, the domestic aspect of this worldwide cultural transformation among the young?

A traditional "coalition politics" which ignores the second and third of these seems to me inadequate. A new-style politics which ignores the persistence and power of the traditional "coalition" seems to me doomed to futility. Bridges, pontoons, life-lines connecting the two ways of thinking and responding we do not yet have. What we must do—at the risk of dizzying ourselves—is to keep within our field of vision all of these discordant matters. Easy it's not; necessary it is.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Joseph Buttinger

Toward Peace At Paris?

January 31, 1969

FIRST, let me provide some necessary background, and then discuss Nixon's assuming the Presidency, and how his choice of Henry Kissinger as chief foreign policy adviser may affect the Paris negotiations.

I

AT THE END of October 1968, after 28 sessions, it seemed no progress had been made at the Paris peace talks. Suddenly, on October 31, President Johnson announced that all bombing attacks on North Vietnam would cease as of November 1 and that, on the basis of an "understanding" between Washington and Hanoi, the Saigon government and the National Liberation Front would join the talks. The first meeting of the expanded conference was to be held on November 6. An NLF delegation, apparently forewarned, arrived in Paris on November 4. But by November 6, no authorized delegates from Saigon had shown up, and the scheduled meeting had to be called off. A Saigon delegation did appear in Paris soon afterwards, but only to state the refusal of the Thieu-Ky government to participate under the conditions agreed upon by Washington and Hanoi. It took ten weeks to overcome Saigon's refusal, and the first session of the enlarged talks was rescheduled for January 25, 1969.

The "understanding" of October 31 confirmed what most observers suspected: the task of the delegates had not consisted merely in delivering predictable propaganda statements. Their main work was done secretly.

Negotiating secretly for five months to achieve no more than a chance for the Paris talks to become productive would be an utterly discouraging fact were it not that in May 1968, when the talks opened, no basis at all existed for productive negotiations. The talks were deadlocked from the beginning, by the conditions under which they had been started. If one says that talks should have begun four years earlier, it is also true that Washington and Hanoi opened them without sufficient preparation, once political and military considerations convinced both sides that a compromise might be preferable to continuing the war.

Contrary to public statements made by both parties, what prevented the beginning of productive talks was not disagreement over the role of the Saigon government and the NLF in peace negotiations. Once the real obstacle to productive talks was removed, this secondary issue was instantly settled. Progress was prevented by Hanoi's insistence on an unconditional cessation of all bombing of the North, and by the refusal of Washington to halt the bombing without some "reciprocity" by Hanoi. This was the reason why for five months the negotiations consisted of public speeches by both sides blaming each other for the fact that no negotiations were taking place, while secretly struggling with each other to find a basis for negotiations.

A real deadlock developed only after the announcement, on October 31, of the "understanding" between Washington and Hanoi, i.e. after a basis for fruitful talks *had* finally been created in five months of secret talks. Saigon's refusal to participate in talks at which the NLF was represented by a separate delegation required another ten weeks of secret struggle—not, however, between Washington and Hanoi but between Washington and Saigon. The Thieu-Ky government rejected the American device (to which Hanoi had agreed) that each side was free to consider the other as only one and itself as two parties to the talks. Since Hanoi no longer objected to the presence of a delegation from the "Saigon Administration," the blame for holding up the widened talks fell on Saigon. Saigon demanded a seating arrangement designed to make the two-way character of the conference explicit—a request that was contrary to the Washington-Hanoi "understanding," since it meant that Hanoi and the NLF agreed to regard themselves as only one party to the talks. Washington obviously knew that this would not be accepted by the other side.

Thus it came about that the powers seeking a settlement of the Vietnamese war were confronted with the first major "substantive" issue, in the ridiculous disguise of a quarrel over the shape of the conference table. For Hanoi and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the NLF the shape of the table mattered not in the least, *as long as it did not oblige them to accept the Saigon contention that the NLF spokesmen were only members of the Hanoi delegation.* No progress at all could be expected if Saigon were allowed to veto *de facto* recognition of the NLF as a conference partner. Nor could Hanoi have been interested in shortening the spectacle of disunity between Washington and Saigon that the beginning of real negotiations had revealed. On the contrary, nothing could have pleased Hanoi more than this demonstration of the fact that no progress was possible unless Saigon was forced to follow Washington's lead.

Measured against the skepticism of most observers last May, it can be said that during the eight months of talks between Washington and Hanoi highly significant progress has been achieved. If the U.S. had maintained the bombing of the North below the 20th parallel and had refused to recognize the NLF as a partner in negotiations, even the slight hopes for peace aroused by the Paris talks last spring would by now be dead.

The talks have confirmed an essential fact: *that progress in the negotiations depends primarily on U.S. willingness to make concessions, and to impose them on Saigon.*

If Washington, still divided over the course to take in Vietnam, is lukewarm in pursuit of peace, Saigon can only be described as hotly opposed to it. The Thieu-Ky government will sabotage all efforts toward a compromise solution. If the Nixon Administration, as seems likely for the time being, continues to seek peace through negotiations, the split between Washington and Saigon, which the "understanding" of October 31 revealed, is bound to widen. The present Saigon regime is the South Vietnamese corollary to the American concept of a military solution of the war, of the "victory" that would have forced Hanoi to abandon the Vietcong and obliged the latter to reconcile themselves to the status quo, i.e. to their permanent exclusion from the legal political life of South Vietnam. Contrary to what President Johnson said in his ill-inspired speech on Vietnam in Detroit on August 19, 1968—that the Vietcong "seek a solution by bullets rather than by ballot"—it is the ballot on which the Communists confidently base their hopes for final victory, and it is the "bullets" provided by the United States that enable the present regime to deny the ballot to its opponents. In a speech on August 27, 1968, President Thieu still affirmed that his regime *"would never accept any Communist to run for election in Vietnam,"* and *"when we say 'one man, one vote,' we mean the vote would only be given to Vietnamese citizens who deserve it."*

Up to the beginning of 1969, the Saigon leadership completely ignored the evidence of American disenchantment with the war, the most dramatic expression of which was Johnson's decision last spring not to seek re-election. Thieu and Ky, frequently delighted by the counsel Johnson had received from McGeorge Bundy, paid no heed to Bundy's speech on October 12, 1968, in which he said that the cost of the Vietnam War to the U.S. had become "plainly unacceptable," and that "its penalties upon us all are much too great." More important in the eyes of Thieu and Ky was that the Democratic National Convention had rejected a mild peace plank, and that Mr. Nixon, apparently not yet as tired of the war as Mr. Johnson, would probably become President and very likely surround himself with advisers no less belligerent than Bundy had once been.

II

THIEU AND KY were not the only ones to be surprised when the expectation that Nixon would abandon Johnson's cautious policy of negotiations proved to be wrong. Nixon's chief adviser on Vietnam, Henry A. Kissinger, saw no reason, after being called to Washington, to withdraw an article written for the January 1969 issue of *Foreign Affairs* in which he too advocated a negotiated settlement of the war. With the sophistication for which he has become known, Kissinger offered to the new American leadership the arguments needed to justify giving up the war; and he was aware that he was addressing himself to people who, far from regretting what the United States had done in Vietnam, were only sorry it had not been successful. In contrast to the military, Kissinger called last year's Tet offensive "the watershed of the American effort," and said that it "overthrew the assumptions of American strategy."

The aim of this strategy had been the de-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

struction of the enemy's main forces in large-scale operations. "The theory was that the defeat of the main forces would cause the guerrillas to wither on the vine." But this purely military approach mistook the nature of this war, in which the aim should have been to establish political control over the population. However, the strategy pursued had the absurd result that "80 per cent of American forces came to be concentrated in areas containing less than 4 per cent of the population." And Kissinger continues: "By opting for military victory through attrition, the American strategy produced what came to be the characteristic feature of the Vietnamese war: military successes that could not be translated into permanent political advantage."

All of this was made apparent by the Tet offensive, which delayed—"perhaps indefinitely —the consolidation of governmental authority, which in turn is the only meaningful definition of 'victory' in guerrilla warfare." Kissinger's conclusion, not unlike that of Bundy, was that the United States could no longer achieve its proclaimed objectives in Vietnam "within a period or with force levels politically acceptable to the American people." The realization of this unwelcome fact ushered in "the quest for a negotiated settlement."

Although undoubtedly better informed than most people, Kissinger nevertheless confessed to be unable to "disentangle from public sources" whether the Saigon government understood that the formula for the widened talks announced on October 31 "amounted to giving the NLF equal status" in the Paris negotiations. Had Saigon agreed to accept this formula before Johnson announced that the widened talks would begin on November 6, and had it only belatedly realized that recognition of the NLF in whatever form was bound to prejudice irrevocably the final settlement? Since "a partial settlement foreshadows the ultimate outcome," *giving to the NLF equal status meant no less than acceptance of their demand to be an important component in the power structure of postwar South Vietnam*— and to prevent this has been Saigon's constant aim.

Kissinger sympathizes with Saigon's refusal to accept equal status with the NLF, and he deeply deplores the "public rift" between Washington and Saigon which has been brought about by admission of the NLF to the Paris talks. He warns against "imposing" a coalition government on Saigon, fearing that this "may well destroy the existing political structure of South Vietnam and thus lead to a Communist take-over." Better let the South Vietnamese settle their political future without any American interference and then accept whatever "freely negotiated" outcome talks between the Saigon regime and the NLF produce. Kissinger defines America's "limited" commitment as follows:

> First, the United States cannot accept a military defeat or a change in the political sructure of South Vietnam brought about by external military force; second, once the North Vietnamese forces and pressures are removed, the United States has no obligation to maintain a government in Saigon by force.

In other words, instead of trying to "impose" a compromise settlement on the Saigon regime, let us be content to go home as soon as North Vietnam has agreed to withdraw its forces, and thus oblige the Saigon leaders to settle their differences with the NLF as best they can.

When Vice-President Ky was asked what he thought about Kissinger's article, he replied, with his customary lack of inhibition, that it was "junk." A few weeks earlier, after several U.S. senators and Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford had publicly warned that Washington might proceed with the Paris talks whether Saigon agreed to participate or not, Ky had advised them not to open their mouths. The Saigon clique, unaware of the profound changes that had taken place in the United States during 1968, confidently expected the Nixon Administration to revert to the policy Johnson had insisted was vital to the security of the United States.

It must have come as a shock to the Saigon leaders when several qualified spokesmen of the new Administration, in the Senate confirmation hearings, deliberately abstained from calling for "victory," and instead spoke of the "limited" objectives the U.S. allegedly had always pursued in Vietnam. This line was taken not only by the new Secretary of State William Rogers but also by Nixon's hawkish Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird. Harriman, Johnson's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

chief negotiator, in his Paris farewell speech on January 13, decried talk of "victory," described the goals of the United States in Vietnam as "limited," and expressed the hope that the American people would not talk "about winning a war."

Harriman of course knew of Nixon's message to President Thieu saying that the new Administration wanted the Saigon regime to accept the deal Johnson's negotiators had concluded for the opening of the widened talks. Other statements, largely overlooked because of Mr. Nixon's reputation as a hard-liner on Vietnam, indicated that his Administration would continue the course Johnson had begun last spring. Undoubtedly hoping that no one would fully realize the political implications of his words, Secretary of Defense Laird also offered the comfortable notion that the expected negotiated settlement would actually be a victory for the United States. He would consider it "victory," he said, if the war established South Vietnam's right of self-determination. Hedrick Smith, discussing this remark in the *New York Times* of January 19, wrote this would seem to be "in keeping with Mr. Nixon's little-noticed comment last October that the Vietcong, so far as he was concerned, could not only vote in South Vietnam but [could] also participate in the South Vietnamese Government, provided they gave up the use of force and agreed to accept democratic processes." The leaders of the Vietcong must have been surprised to learn that the achievement of their goal would turn out to be a victory for the U.S.

Attention must also be drawn to the largely unrecognized concessions Hanoi made for the sake of obtaining a complete halt in the bombing of the North. *According to American estimates, four North Vietnamese divisions have been withdrawn from the South since last summer.* Furthermore, the significant de-escalation that has taken place in the fighting can be ascribed only to the declining number of Vietcong-initiated clashes. American propaganda has not acknowledged these facts as possibly a part of the "reciprocity" demanded by Washington, and Hanoi could hardly say that troops that had "never been" in the South had been withdrawn. On the lower levels of American propaganda, the claims were that these vanished divisions had been "battered," that they would be fit for combat only after having been re-equipped, and that they were in Laos and near the Demilitarized Zone, ready to re-enter South Vietnam. As to the Vietcong, they lacked aggressiveness because their losses last winter and spring had broken their offensive capabilities. In order to exploit the enemy's alleged weakness, the American command maintained, and for a while increased, its own "search and destroy" operations, at a cost of 8,000 American lives since the start of the Paris talks. If, in spite of these operations, the much discussed "lull" in the fighting remained unbroken while the conditions for resuming the Paris talks were being negotiated, the reason obviously was the enemy's consistent restraint.

III

AMERICAN DIPLOMACY, contrary to American propaganda, secretly took the enemy's military restraint for the "signal" that had been requested from Hanoi as a condition for a complete bombing halt. Instead of a verbal assurance of some "reciprocity" prior to the bombing halt, Hanoi was now merely expected to refrain from actions that would force Washington to *resume* the bombing once it was stopped. When, on October 9, Hanoi offered to accept the Saigon government at the Paris talks if the NLF were also admitted, the stage was set for the "understanding" of October 31. Even Dean Rusk and General Abrams agreed the bombing halt could now be risked.

But this American retreat, facilitated by Hanoi's skillful diplomacy, does not mean that the entire American leadership has renounced all hope of a military solution and is now ready to accept a political settlement even at the risk that the Communists may achieve "with the ballot" what they failed to bring about by force. For Mr. Johnson, the decision to stop the bombing and agree to a Vietcong delegation at the Paris talks cannot have been very difficult. This parting move of his Vietnam policy would reinforce his claim to be given credit for having opened the road to a peaceful settlement in case it really came about—without having to accept the blame if such a settlement should reveal that the entire American effort in Vietnam had been in vain. In any case, Johnson himself would no longer be re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sponsible when truly painful concessions might have to be made. He could leave it to his successor to decide between such concessions and trying again, at even higher costs and casualties, for a military solution.

Nor can Nixon's willingness to join Johnson in forcing Saigon into line be taken as evidence that the new Administration is fully aware of, and ready to make, the political concessions necessary to reach a negotiated settlement. For Nixon, the legacy of an unresolved conflict with Saigon would have been highly unwelcome. Unless Nixon was willing openly to reject the idea of a peaceful settlement, the first act of his Administration in regard to Vietnam could only have been to threaten Saigon with pressures stronger than Johnson had been willing to apply.

Since early in 1968, even those who still seek a military solution have recognized that talking peace and entering into negotiations have become expediencies without which the old aim of trying to "win" the war could no longer be pursued. At this game, Nixon can be expected to be no less adept than Johnson. For the Saigon clique, for most of the American military leadership, and for the many who still think like Dean Rusk, acceptance of the bombing halt and the broadened Paris talks does not mean that their old objectives have to be given up. They argue that these were necessary but only temporary concessions to the present mood of the American people, and that there is no harm in peace talks—provided they can be drawn out indefinitely. Even the bombing halt is quite acceptable to these people, since they are convinced that it will turn out to have been only a bombing pause. The propaganda claims of these circles have restored their belief, briefly shaken after last year's Tet offensive, that militarily and politically, the Vietcong is in rapid decline; quickly to eliminate them as a threat to the Saigon regime requires only that they be deprived of further support from Hanoi.

For America's unreformed "hawks," the "understanding" of October 31 requires not only an end to Hanoi's support for the Vietcong, but also a one-sided de-escalation of the war: the Vietcong must abstain from attacking cities and other places that are the centers of Vietnamese and American military power, while the Saigon troops, in "police actions" vigorously supported by American forces, proceed to defeat the guerrillas.

If it turns out, as Kissinger warns, that "Hanoi cannot be asked to leave the NLF to the mercy of Saigon," so much the better. The bombing will then be resumed, the Paris talks broken up, and the all-out war against the North long advocated by these people as the only promising course can at last be started. That their influence is still great became evident when the outgoing Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford found it necessary to denounce their concept publicly.

IV

BUT THE CONCEPT of those who want a settlement permitting the United States to withdraw its military forces from Vietnam also does not promise an early end to the war. It suffers from misconceptions which, if not abandoned, make a compromise solution quite impossible. The NLF and Hanoi will never agree to what still seems to be the core of Washington's terms for a political settlement: that the NLF, in return for the right to participate in elections, dissolve their military units, recognize the legitimacy of the present regime, and agree to elections under the present constitutional structure. The NLF cannot be expected to disarm as long as the present government remains in power, and it will agree to elections only after this government is removed.

Contrary to a widespread assumption, this, does not mean that Washington, for the sake of peace, will have to "impose" a so-called coalition government on Saigon, i.e. a government with NLF participation. What the NLF demands is an "interim" government with which it can enter into talks about election procedures; a government composed of men ready to cooperate with the NLF, in place of one that throws the advocates of talks with the NLF into prison. What is expected of Washington, at a much later date, is acceptance of a coalition government if it should result from democratically conducted elections.

American pressure to bring about the "interim" government with which the NLF can negotiate will hardly be required, provided Washington continues to do what had to be done to get the widened Paris talks started:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

break all attempts by the Saigon government to sabotage progress at the peace talks. Fierce opposition by the Saigon clique must be expected against every new step toward a compromise. Does the Nixon Administration yet realizes that the war cannot be liquidated as long as the present Saigon leaders remain in power? The answer is not clear. But if the talks continue at all, even Henry Cabot Lodge will learn that progress can be made only through concessions to the NLF at the expense of the Saigon regime. And progress at Paris, not a request by Washington to resign, threatens the existence of the Thieu-Ky government, for as Kissinger remarked in his article, "support for the side which seems to be losing will collapse."

Apparently afraid to draw the unpleasant conclusion which logically flows from his own sound premises, Kissinger urges Washington to propose to the Saigon regime "to broaden its political base so that it is stronger for the political contest with the Communists which sooner or later it must undertake." Sound advice, which, however, has already been given in vain over the last fifteen years to every one of South Vietnam's anti-Communist governments. By now, however, the political evolution, bound to take place in South Vietnam if progress is made at all in Paris, will make any genuine "broadening" of the present Saigon regime only a step toward its replacement.

The "understanding" of October 31 has undoubtedly improved the prospects for peace in Vietnam; but how long the new talks will last and what their final outcome will be, no one can predict. This much, however, is certain: *Only if Washington is ready to accept, and, if necessary, hasten the disappearance of the Thieu-Ky government, can we hope for decisive progress toward a negotiated settlement of the war.* Otherwise peace for Vietnam will still be as remote after another eight months of negotiations as it was when the Paris talks began.

In our next issue:

THE REIGN OF VIRTUE

Reflection on China's Cultural Revolution

—by *Benjamin I. Schwartz*

Norman Hill

Roy Innes vs. Roy Wilkins

THE DEBATE between Roy Wilkins and Roy Innis over demands by Negro students for separate black studies departments has major implications. The question they are arguing is whether separatism is a condition that black Americans should desire and, in fact, struggle to achieve. If the answer is "yes," as Innis would have it, then in his own words "the civil rights movement is dead." But if Wilkins is correct in opposing a black "version of segregation and Jim Crow," then not only must the civil rights movement stay alive if Negro Americans are to have equality, but the separatists must be criticized (and, as Wilkins proposes, fought in the courts) for commiting an injustice against the black community. And there is little ground for compromise. The debate takes place within the context of two related but contradictory movements. The first, which is largely political and sociological, involves a dramatic increase in the numbers of black college students as a result of the breakdown of Jim Crow. The second is the psychological reaction of black students to the integrated situation in which they now find themselves.

There are now 400,000 black undergraduates representing about 6 per cent of the college population; this figure exceeds by 100,000 the projection made by the Census Bureau two years ago. The impact of this change has been felt largely by predominantly white universities which have intensified their recruitment efforts.

Ironically, these efforts to advance Negro education have hurt Negro colleges in the South where half of the nation's black undergraduates still attend school. Vincent Harding, a Negro historian, has noted that opportunities in the North are taking the best black students and professors away from the South, thus depress-

Norman Hill has been active for many years in the struggle for Negro rights. During the early sixties he was National Program Director of CORE; he then worked in the Civil Rights Department of the AFL-CIO, and is now Associate Director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing the level of education there. Negro professors in particular have been recruited by Northern schools to meet student demands for black faculty members. These student demands are legitimate. There *should* be more black professors in the universities just as there should be more black students. But there is a sociological reality which students have yet to confront. There are simply not enough Negro professors to go around, nor will there be in the foreseeable future. Last year only 0.78 per cent of all Ph.D.'s awarded went to blacks, which is slightly *less* than the previous year. Many Negroes with a college degree are leaving academia for well-paying jobs in industry and government. While we should expect the number of black professors to increase during the coming decade, it will not do so dramatically. It is this fact that makes unrealistic student demands for separate black studies departments staffed by black teachers.

WHY ARE black students making such demands in the first place? One answer is that they are striving for pride and dignity, and that they are trying to destroy the racial myths that have distorted the image of the black man, both in his own mind and in the minds of white people. In this respect, I think these efforts are altogether praiseworthy.

Yet these demands for "identity" begin to mean something entirely different once they take on a separatist character. They no longer represent an assertion of pride and the destruction of myths. Rather, they become an attempt to protect a fragile sense of pride from a threatening outside world by blocking out that world. And they seek to establish new myths to replace the old. Separatism, in this sense, is a defensive reaction to the shock of integration. Black students, who have been brutalized in the past by inferior segregated education, are now being put into the same classrooms with whites and told to match up. Many of them, I am afraid, are not sure they can. Kenneth Clark has brilliantly analyzed the psychological dynamics that are involved here:

> The walls of segregation are not only humiliating—but given this type of chronic humiliation there develop self-doubt, subtle and flagrant forms of self-hatred, personal and group frustrations, internalized hostility, aggressions, self-denial, or bombast. Under these conditions the walls of segregation become pathetically protective. Within them the subjugated individuals need not meet the tests of free and open competition—need not expose vulnerable egos to single standards of competence. The demand for racial justice on the part of American Negroes is balanced by an almost equal psychological reality of the fear of the removal of racial barriers.

Many Negro students who will not permit themselves to be judged by "white" standards may be saying, "I am afraid that if judged by those standards I shall prove incompetent."

But black students *must* meet those standards, in law and physics as well as in "black studies," if they are to get decent jobs and substantially improve their economic condition. Their sense of pride and dignity will come after they have achieved this competence, not before. Moreover, because black students have been subjected to inferior education in the past, they must now demand the very best education that is possible. And this cannot happen within a separatist context which, especially because of the lack of enough competent black professors, will mean that inferior teachers will be giving black students an inferior education so that they can then go out into the world and get inferior jobs. Black people, I should think, have had enough of "separate but equal" to know that it must always be a form of degradation.

A word about the white allies of the black separatists. There are some who, out of a sense of guilt as well as a need to identify with the black "revolution," have unthinkingly supported the most intemperate of the black spokesmen. These whites, secure in their comforts and careers but "oppressed" by ennui, are wishing for a kind of revolution-by-proxy. Of the other allies there are those who have always been for segregation and others who see separatism as a means of satisfying *some* blacks without having to spend the money that will be needed if *all* blacks are to get an excellent education. With "friends" like these, black people need no enemies.

Let me emphasize that I whole-heartedly support black studies. The history of the Negro in America is an extraordinarily relevant study for all Americans; it has been mostly neglected or distorted in the past. It is a history both magnificent and tragic, and one can only be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

come wiser from studying it. In this regard, I commend the proposal of the Harvard faculty committee to offer a degree in Afro-American Studies that will be open to all students.

What I fear is that black studies may be made a pretext for separatism. If it is, not only will Negro history continue to be distorted—this time by black people with their own racial and political axes to grind—but a new and tragic chapter shall be written into it. It will be a chapter replete with echoes of past injustices, and it will tell the story of how the civil rights movement was destroyed before it could achieve for black people the equality which they had so long been denied.

Murray Hausknecht

The Union and The Professors

In December 1968, shortly after the last strike of New York's United Federation of Teachers ended, its sister union, the United Federation of College Teachers, entered a collective bargaining election at the City University of New York. The UFCT's opponent was the Legislative Conference, an old organization of faculty members that in the past had functioned primarily as a lobby. For this election, the University had been split into two units by the supervising state agency: one made up of part-time faculty, the other of tenured teachers. The UFCT won easily in the first unit, but it was only after a run-off election that it lost to the Conference in the other unit. Since the Conference does not define itself as a union, except in a purely formal sense, it would seem that professors are still far from ready for unionization. However, only 15 per cent of the tenured faculty chose the third alternative of no collective bargaining agent, and the UFCT's showing was far better than most observers had expected.

If the University had not been split into two units, the UFCT would now be the bargaining agent for the entire University. Since it shares many characteristics with other publicly-supported institutions, the results have more than local significance.

In 1946 there were four municipal colleges in the city. Since then these four have grown to seven, plus a college of police science, a two-year upper-level college, six community colleges (with a seventh scheduled to open in September), a medical school affiliate, a social work school, and a graduate center. Like other public universities, the City University exists in a state of chronic financial crisis. Consequently, physical facilities have not kept step with enrollment: classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories, library space, office space, clerical assistance for the faculty—all are in short supply. The one exception is salaries, which are among the best in the nation. Faculty ranks are equated by tradition with supervisory levels in the public school system; and when the UFT organized the high school teachers, the college professors enjoyed one of the most profitable free rides in the history of unionism. In the absence of collective bargaining, though, the University has not provided some fringe benefits won by the UFT for its constituency.

Those benefiting minimally from the increase in salaries are the lecturers, the non-tenured and largely part-time staff drawn mainly from the graduate-student population of the city. They staff the colleges' large evening sessions, and without them the day sessions would be in serious trouble. The lecturers' salaries are absurdly low, and their status is indicated by a former president who referred to them as "the fluid bottom." They tend to be invisible to the tenured faculty and the Legislative Conference alike. The lecturers were predisposed to be sympathetic to the UFCT, if only because it was the one organization that paid any attention to them. In turn, the union was predisposed to attend to them by something more than simply the dictates of organizing strategy.

The growth of the UFCT coincided with the rapid expansion of the University, and it gained its greatest support in the community colleges which were expanding at a faster rate than the rest of the University. The UFCT president, Israel Kugler, himself a community college professor, is uniquely fitted to understand his colleagues' problems. They are the marginal men of the academic world who are viewed by the professoriate as nothing more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than, at best, superior high-school teachers lacking proper professional credentials. And, indeed, the community colleges have reached into the high schools for their staffs.

In New York this has meant recruiting people who are already familiar with the idea of unionization, and for whom membership does not conflict with preconceived notions of "professionalism." Their marginal status is reinforced by the status of their students; in New York, as elsewhere, those whose grades do not earn them admission to the senior colleges attend the community colleges. The teachers there are also relatively less mobile; today anyone with a Ph.D. and some evidence of "scholarly productivity" has a relatively good chance to move elsewhere or, at least, delude himself that "once the book is finished" he will be able to do so. With only his teaching skills to offer (and who cares about that alone today?), the community college teacher must make it at his own college.

A by-product of all this is that the annual academic trauma of promotion results in keener disappointments and sharper resentments. All promotion systems are shot through with irrationality, but the level rises when "teaching ability" is the sole criterion. Moreover, the community college teacher has no access to the other "reward structure"—recognition of his professional peers. The "productive scholar" gains some psychic rewards, perhaps, when his work is published and more important, he can use this recognition as leverage in negotiating for salary increases and promotion. But the community college teacher cannot escape awareness of his invidious status. His social and psychological situation bears some resemblance to that of the industrial worker, and it is one that the UFCT leadership has no trouble in understanding.

But to win the election the union had to make inroads into the faculties at the four-year colleges, and here they have been less successful. Their faculties have all the usual notions about the incompatibility of unionization and professionalism, and the good salaries and relatively secure status dulls the edge of discontent. Still, changes in the University are eroding faculty resistance. The UFCT has always come on strong; its tone, if not its actual words, are reminiscent of the radical organizers of the twenties and thirties attacking "the bosses." This is no accident, since Kugler and the activists are "Old Left" in temperament and outlook, and see themselves continuing in the colleges the work begun long ago in the needle trades, in auto and steel. This determined "anti-Establishment" posture appeals to the younger faculty members who are influenced by the politics of the sixties. They are far from being convinced that a union is necessary, but they are convinced that the University must be improved.

The younger people are not alone in their dissatisfaction; they are merely more vocal and impatient. Commitments to teaching and research are frustrated by large classes, inadequate facilities, lack of money, and often irrational administrative behavior. But there is a more critical source of discontent: The growth of the University has led to a feeling that important decisions are slipping out of the faculty's hands. It is not so much that the University administration has usurped power but that the scale and nature of the system make it difficult for faculty to cope with problems. Thus, as the number of students increased, straining already scarce resources, there seemed no way to affect decisions that allowed the number of students to exceed available resources. Setting admission policy is, in theory, a faculty prerogative in the University; collective bargaining is seen by many as an instrument for translating theory into practice. An effective union, in other words, can be a means through which a faculty gains or regains a sense of control of its environment.

At the same time, the idea of a union also tends to reinforce the sense of loss of control. College professors have a keen ignorance of unions and share middle-class prejudices—"union" equals "Jimmy Hoffa." That is, a union is simply one more organization designed to rob them of their autonomy and, since professional autonomy is central to the self-image of the college professor, the stereotype of the union is particularly threatening. Unfortunately, the election at the City University was held in the wake of the UFT strikes, which did nothing to allay fears. The UFT has a perverse genius for presenting itself in the worst possible light; regardless of how one felt about the issues in the strikes, after listen-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing to Albert Shanker it was difficult to see the UFT as a union of serious professional people. The UFCT thereby suffered from the negative aura of the UFT.

THE UFCT'S MAIN TACTIC in the pre-election campaign was to articulate discontents and to stress its own militancy as an advocate of faculty interests. The Legislative Conference emphasized that it was not a union (which it was not), and suggested there was something sinister about the UFCT's affiliation with the American Federation of Teachers. In short, a vote for the Conference would not commit one to a radical or unconventional course of action. The attraction of this conservative position was enhanced when the UFCT publicized one of its pet ideas: Once an individual reached the top salary level of his rank (annual increments within rank are automatic at the University) he would be promoted automatically, if not promoted before then, into the next higher rank. The proposal had been debated within the union for years, with only the community college teachers favoring it. The idea conflicts with the professorial self-image, and it was attacked during the campaign as "expressing the Civil Service mentality of the public school teacher." It did nothing to abolish fears that the union's policies would be dominated by the interests and perspectives of the community college teachers.

About a week before the election, Chancellor Albert Bowker fell victim to bad staff work and issued a brochure echoing the line of the American Association of University Professors —the faculties should choose the third option of no bargaining agent. The AAUP believes that unions and collective bargaining are "unprofessional" and a threat to the principle of faculty governance. The election results demonstrated that both the Chancellor and the AAUP badly misconceived the temper and general level of discontent.

Of the 3,263 lecturers who voted, 1,634 or about 70 per cent favored the union; and in the run-off election it captured the votes of two-thirds of the community college teachers.

However, in the other colleges only a little over a third of the professors voted for the union. That is, the more marginal the status of the college teacher the more likely he is to vote for a union. Yet one ought not to overlook the significant fact that of the 4,097 tenured faculty who voted in the run-off election, 1,774 or 46 per cent cast ballots for the UFT.

"New York is not the United States"—well, yes and no. One cannot immediately extrapolate from the City University to all others. But it is not completely different: All universities have their "fluid bottoms"; community colleges are springing up like crabgrass all over the academic landscape; most universities, especially public ones, operate with too few resources to meet the needs of their students and faculties; and everywhere people feel they are losing control over their environments. It seems clear that college unions are inevitable, and they will arrive first at public community colleges. Where the surrounding environment is liberal and the institution is publicly supported, as in New York, it will be easier to organize the professoriate. (The mind boggles at the thought of a UFCT at the University of Texas.) But at this level we are likely to see only pseudo-unions like the Legislative Conference, until some fundamental problems are resolved.

Unions like the UFCT now have the perspectives of business unionism. For most community college teachers, a badly exploited group, the traditional orientations can result in significant gains. Still, a college is not a factory, professors are not "workers," and administrators and trustees not "bosses." The very idea of a university legitimatizes professional autonomy and control over significant decisions by the faculty, and at colleges like those of the City University mechanisms permitting such control do exist. Traditional union thought cannot provide an answer to the question of what role a union can play under conditions like these. Whatever the answer is, it will have to go beyond the simplistic notion that improvements in salaries and working conditions, as important as these are, automatically mean an improvement in education. It may often be difficult to discern, but college professors are interested in educating the young, and they will be easier to organize when they can be persuaded that unionization could be a progressive force in improving higher education.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Modest Proposal:

Should the Ford Foundation Be Decentralized?

ONE OF THE MOST appealing themes of student radicals is that in the modern world the individual finds himself all but helpless against the power of enormous institutions, be they government agencies, private corporations, or multiversities. It now is possible that this complaint will also hold true for semipublic institutions, such as the foundations which have at their disposal millions upon millions of dollars.

Until recently this was hardly a problem, since the worst that might be said against foundations was that their cultural/educational benefactions were ill-conceived. But now that the Ford Foundation has decided to enter the treacherous arena of social policy, its enormous resources—disposed of by organizational bureaucrats and their attendant intellectuals—can be a factor in public affairs.

During the recent New York school strike, the Ford Foundation was tacitly aligned with the Ocean Hill School Board. That its motives were of the best, we don't doubt for a minute. Yet the Ford Foundation found itself opposed—not to the Power Elite, not to the Establishment, not to the wealthy corporations — but to a trade union representing teachers. The rights or wrongs of this conflict needn't here concern us. Nor would it be quite correct to say that the UFT was as helpless as the solitary individual confronting a corporation. Still, by the gingerly appropriations it made to the Ocean Hill School Board, the Ford Foundation showed that potentially it could align itself with one or another side in those tragic, yet perhaps unavoidable, struggles that seem likely to break out between communities and organizations, each of which is composed of persons of modest means and each of which has at least some claim on the right. Thereby the Ford Foundation could find itself, through the sheer enormity of its resources, becoming a decisive factor in such a struggle. At the very least, the other side could easily get the impression it was facing an institution of great wealth and power.

We offer here a modest proposal. Let the Ford Foundation, itself an enthusiastic proponent of school decentralization, submit itself to partial or temporary decentralization by a fair-minded committee chosen by public and communal agencies. If some executives of the Ford Foundation wished, for instance, to help the Ocean Hill Board, another group in the Foundation might care to help the teachers. Each might then be given a modest budget—modest, that is, by the standards of the Ford Foundation—in order to carry out its social program, so that the initiative of all the people would be encouraged. While thus involving itself in social action, the Foundation could allow its component parts—I assume it is not monolithic in opinion—to act with the freedom that is said to come from decentralization. Each segment of the Foundation could do "its own thing."

There remains another matter which greatly interests people at the Foundation —community control.

One need not be a Marxist to suggest that a good portion of the Foundation's funds came out of the skins and backs of automobile workers, underpaid and overworked by Henry and Edsel. Would it not therefore be a superb gesture, in line with its recent interests, if the Ford Foundation were to begin a systematic consultation with the employees of the Ford Motor Company, either through their union (called the United Automobile Workers) or through direct inquiries? If this last suggestion strikes people as too radical, it may be necessary to content ourselves for the time being with the more modest proposal: decentralize the Ford Foundation!—OBSERVER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Two by Günter Grass

(1) Violence Rehabilitated

On Holy Thursday, 1968, *a youth named Bachmann, an admirer of Hitler, shot and critically wounded Rudi Dutschke, the leader of a militant Berlin student group. As a result of this attempted murder, there were violent student demonstrations during Easter week. The following speech was delivered by Günter Grass on May* 1, 1968, *in Hildesheim, and published in* Der Spiegel, *May* 1968.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Only a few years ago the Federal Republic presented the image of a humdrum middle-class society, characterized by hard work, security, law and order, and political lethargy.

And now suddenly the Germans have been seized with unrest. The younger generation, only yesterday well behaved and fully adjusted to the existing order, are in a turmoil; they protest, demonstrate, and laugh at the rules of our domesticated democracy. Their fathers pat them on the back and tell them they don't realize how well off they are, but it doesn't go down, because the chasm between the theory and the practice of government is open for all to see, and none of the usual cloaks are big enough to cover it.

Even at the family board fathers are called to account: "Look here, Greece is a member of NATO and NATO is supposed to be defending freedom. Look here, when the Americans use napalm, it's a war crime, isn't it?"

And Father utters words of reassurance, sweats and utters more words of reassurance. He talks about power blocs and spheres of interest, and points out that the other side does the same thing. And he says he won't stand for Communist propaganda at the dinner table.

But it would be a grave mistake to suppose that the dissatisfaction of the younger generation finds its sole reflection on the Left. Young people are also to be met with far to the Right, in the gathering places of the old Party comrades. These young people are at once nonpolitical and political. Themselves full of contradictions, they move about like bulls in a china shop in a society that does not dare to resolve its own contradictions. The youth-protest movement has brought the fragility of our insufficiently established democracy into evidence. In this it has been successful, but it is far from certain where this success will lead. Either it will bring about long-overdue reforms, ranging from student representation to parliamentary reform and the replacement of the NATO treaty by an all-European

Copyright © 1968 by Hermann Luchterhand Verlag GmbH, Neuwied und Berlin.
English translation copyright © 1967, 1969 by Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.
From *Speak Out* by Günter Grass, translated by Ralph Manheim. Published by Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. A Helen and Kurt Wolff Book.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

peace including the Warsaw Pact countries, or else nothing will happen, and then the uncertainty that has now been laid bare will provide false prophets with promising markets and free advertising.

Already there is a confusion of language: students try to enlighten the workers and are occasionally threatened with blows because they speak a jargon that no worker can understand. The cleavage deepens. Trade unionists and Social Democrats, in Berlin and elsewhere, mobilize the workers against the students. A helpless Chancellor regrets that the emergency laws are not yet in force to help him keep order. But the student's reply to this stereotype appeal to order is the appeal of a North Vietnamese politician. Since irrational slogans change nothing but merely stir up the masses and arouse long-familiar aggressions, violence has been rehabilitated in the Federal Republic. For months the mass-circulation papers of the Springer trust have been clamoring for energetic measures, for active "self-help," yet after the attempt to murder Rudi Dutschke they made a show of righteous indignation. And after the attempt on Dutschke's life the actions of certain student organizations, especially the S.D.S.,[1] unleashed a movement of counter-violence.

The outcome—two deaths in Munich—raises the question of responsibility. What I hold up to those who share the responsibility—the spokesmen of the S.D.S. and the Extraparliamentary Opposition—is that after the attempt on Rudi Dutschke's life they did nothing to prevent a spontaneous reaction in which indignation had free rein and political considerations were left out of account. What the opponents of the student protest movement expected happened. Up to that point, it would have been possible to make broad sections of the public understand where the guilt lay; this emotional reaction inevitably effaced the beginnings of reflection. There ought to have been a preparatory pause, followed by well-organized demonstrations calculated to enlighten the public. Instead, there was an emotional reaction without political content. And now the question arises: Who was responsible?

But thus far this grave mistake has only provoked scholastic discussions: Where does violence begin? Where does it stop? Violence against persons, no; violence against objects, yes; but when objects are used by persons, when the throwing of stones gets out of control, then scholastic discussion must cease.

I have not come here to make a secret of my skepticism. May 1 is a political holiday, a summons to speak frankly. For the results of the elections in Baden-Württemberg cannot be glossed over. Even if Minister of Economics Karl Schiller has led the West German economy out of the pit, things will continue to go downhill with this country as long as the Great Coalition under the former National Socialist Kurt Georg Kiesinger blocks every alternative and makes the N.P.D. a respectable party with smiling prospects for the future.

The S.P.D. should abandon this alliance before it is destroyed by the alliance. The mistaken decisions of Party Chairmen Willy Brandt and Herbert Wehner must be reversed in order that this country may again have a strong opposition capable of development. The Social Democrats should look for their allies not to the Right of themselves, but among the young protesters, now helpless and left to their own resources. Not only our parliamentary democracy, but also the oldest democratic party of Germany, is in need of far-reaching reforms. How could it allow shallow intrigue and petty bureaucracy to alienate first the Socialist Student League and then the Social Democratic University League from the party? The S.D.S. would not have veered toward utopianism and radicalism had it not been expelled from the S.P.D. I wish that this breach between the Left-socialist, argumentative youth and the S.P.D. could be mended. I wish Rosa Luxemburg's

[1] Socialist Student League.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plea for the freedom to disagree might find a hearing on both sides. But who in this country is willing to listen to a plea for tolerance?

OF COURSE IT IS LAUDABLE to go on talking the language of reason. Of course every day offers an opportunity to mediate with little success between adversaries congealed in their positions. Of course it is morally rewarding to play the heroic fireman in the midst of incendiaries, and anyone who wants to can sit for quite some time rather uncomfortably—I speak from experience—between two stools until, yes, until he falls to the floor; that is the role of the liberal, the useful idiot in the service of one or the other side, the Simple Simon who still believes that a socialist democracy can be built by evolutionary methods.

All this would be normal, it might be all right to go on in the same way—with a vacation now and then—if there had not meanwhile been three deaths, if it weren't for the visible and the invisible N.P.D., except for the danger that three deaths might lead to many more deaths, and if there were not strong indications that the visible and the invisible N.P.D. might openly unite.

Let us look back: On June 2, 1967, in Berlin the student Benno Ohnesorg was shot by Police Officer Karl-Heinz Kurras. Was that shot really fired by Kurras alone? What had to happen before a policeman—even if he was trigger-happy—could draw his pistol, remove the safety catch, and fire the fatal shot? The Springer papers, especially *Bild,* had been calling for violence, for "self-help." Hard desk work was needed to arouse the aggressive instincts of our people. How can they be put to sleep again?

Let us look back: On Holy Thursday three shots rang out on the Kurfürstendamm in Berlin. We know the marksman's name,[2] we have seen the list of his previous convictions, we are familiar with his legend as it has been so touchingly cooked up by the press. He had, so says his mother, only one friend: his motorcycle. He painted little pictures and hung them in the parlor. One of these little pictures was published in the press. And just as he painted and exhibited his pictures in his room, he himself was painted and his picture exhibited to the public: An odd-ball. A lunatic with a police record. A house painter. A very special case. Hence an outcast unrelated to our basically healthy society. No concern of ours. . . . No concern of ours. . . .

No less a man than Chancellor Kiesinger sent a message of sympathy to Frau Dutschke and thereupon proceeded to defend the National Democrats against the accusation of complicity. The students pointed at the House of Springer. The actual murder weapon, they declared, was the open and veiled appeals to violence of the Springer press, especially its Berlin papers. Violence was answered with violence, windowpanes were smashed, fires set, stones hurled, and records thrown into disorder. The lone odd-ball and would-be murderer swelled into a trigger-happy army: He, the solitary friend of his motorcycle, had merely carried out the plans which busy pens on many desks had been sketching for many months.

Seldom has otherwise so torn a society been so involuntarily yet harmoniously united in a task—the task of singling out one odd-ball, lunatic house painter from perhaps a hundred thousand odd-balls, and impelling him to reach for his pistol. But didn't this solitary odd-ball say that the murder of Martin Luther King had inspired him to pick himself out a King and shoot him down? Since we are chronically innocent, mustn't someone else be guilty, in this case the Americans? Let's face it. American models, good and bad, find in us their epigones. And since epigones can seldom answer for their own acts, the House of Springer likens itself to the persecuted Jews and the spokesmen of the pro-

[2] The reference is to Bachmann, the would-be murderer of Rudi Dutschke, who had portraits of Hitler, painted by himself, hanging in his room.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

test movement liken themselves to the oppressed Negroes. It's hard to find heroic models in a mediocre democracy sicklied o'er with compromise; so we borrow. The true victims of persecution are defenseless against the falsification and banalization of their Calvary.

This once again so disastrous German revolution and the counterrevolution it inevitably provoked are characterized by false notes, theatrical gestures, and presumption. It has often seemed to me that revolutionary committees and police chiefs dig up scenes from historical revolutions and model their behavior on Eisenstein's films and on early documentaries. Seldom have newspapers and illustrated magazines found more rewarding material; seldom have police officers had such frequent occasion to convert their training into action and to proclaim the freedom of the nightstick; seldom has an extreme Rightist party acquired votes so cheaply. The elections in Baden-Württemberg were said to have proved that on the one hand there is no basis for a revolution, but that on the other hand there are few barriers left to halt a *coup* from the Right.

The Federal Republic, as we all know, has many faults; they are obvious. Arrogant politicians, corrupted by power, are expertly engaged in eroding the substance of the constitutional state. Yet this country has not deserved to have the House of Springer share in its government, extending its pressure even to the Parliament, or to be driven by a few desperate revolutionaries—desperate because there is no basis for their revolution—into a civil war hysteria which, to close the circle, provides the Springer press with banner headlines and the N.P.D. with new voters.

It has become fashionable either to lump the whole younger generation together in a blanket condemnation, or else to applaud it blindly on the ground that "the young people are our future." Neither attitude is free from opportunism. The area between these camps of Rightist and Leftist opportunism is not a comfortable place to live in. But since I see no reason for succumbing to hysteria, I am quite willing to put up with the discomfort, though the libelous statements of both camps offer material for a paper skyscraper.

Let Herr Kiesinger believe that he is expressing the will of the German people when he invokes authority and emergency laws; let Herr Springer continue to feel that rising circulation figures prove him right; let the leaders of the S.D.S. go on defining violence as coldly and technically as if the deaths of the last few weeks had resulted from traffic accidents; let all three of these tendencies and their following work hand in hand to demolish the already ramshackle edifice of democracy in this country—I for my part refuse to let my judgment be clouded by all-or-nothing theses. The justified protest movement of the young people, which is not limited to students, must be saved from irrationalism if it is to become effective and if an entire generation is not once again to relapse into apolitical resignation merely because its utopian goals could not be attained.

Who benefits by old-fashioned class-struggle positions? In Berlin and Hamburg, students tried to stop Springer trucks. In both cases the drivers stepped on the gas. The outcome: two students seriously injured in Berlin and one in Hamburg. Can there be any more glaring and more frightening proof that misunderstanding between workers and students can and does foment hostility between workers and students?

And let's not have any talk about fundamental political antagonisms. No, it requires no political genius to throw light on the antagonisms between workers and students. A student of behavior patterns who has thus far concentrated his attention on the greylag goose or the common carp would know what to make of them. . . .

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I have no other weapon than the word, my possibilities are limited. This platform is available to me for only a short time. Since May 1 is a political

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

holiday, I should like to devote the few minutes still at my disposal to a plea against any further hardening of positions. Totalitarian demands are being raised on both sides. On one side: "Expropriate Springer"; on the other, "Suppress the S.D.S." If these extremes are to be reconciled in an evolutionary, democratic spirit, not only the Parliament and Herr Springer but also the S.D.S. must begin to show some understanding. This organization is not monolithic; it comprises several groups which freely discuss their possibilities and manias together. Even if the remote political goals of the S.D.S. are not my goals, I recognize its achievement, especially as a promoter of university reform, but also as the motive force within the student protest movement. In both senses of the word, it *deserves* criticism, and it is up to us to provide that criticism.

My suggestion is that the S.D.S., especially in Munich and Berlin, where it has been at fault for fomenting irresponsible actions, should withdraw from its position of leadership, which is in any case questionable. I advise the S.D.S. to demand the resignation of the leaders of its Munich and Berlin groups. When after the events of June 2, 1967,[3] Mayor Albertz of Berlin, Senator Büsch, and Police Chief Duensing were asked—and rightly so—to resign, they did indeed resign. Similarly the S.D.S. must acknowledge its mistakes and take the consequences, unless it wants to be more incorrigibly arrogant than the establishment it attacks.

At the same time I call on the Social Democratic University League to abandon its policy of solidarity at any price with its political allies, in other words, to stop covering the mistakes of the S.D.S. The student protest movement ceases to be convincing when it adopts the impure methods of its political adversaries.

But anyone who imagines that the only way to save democracy is to suppress the S.D.S. should consider the incalculable harm done to democracy by the mere fact that a former National Socialist has become Chancellor. There is no point in getting excited about the rapid growth of the N.P.D. as long as Herr Kiesinger, through the revalorization of his political past, revalorizes the N.P.D. Instead of suppressing the S.D.S., we should do better to ask ourselves whether our democratic form of government can stand up against such wanton devaluation of the office of Chancellor.

Yesterday in the course of a debate in the Parliament, Chancellor Kiesinger tried to explain the electoral success of the N.P.D. in Baden-Württemberg. He reeled off all manner of true and half-true explanations: the peasants' resentment of the government; the repercussions of the Easter disorders, and so on. And he tried to allay the alarm of our neighbors by defending the N.P.D. against the imputation that it was a new edition of National Socialism, a neo-Nazi party.

With his own special brand of eloquence he reduced the whole matter to the dimensions of a trifling misdemeanor which had been misinterpreted and overestimated by our neighbors. And not a word—in this he proved himself a master of the art of omission—about the part he himself had played, if only involuntarily, in helping this rising party to respectability.

In joining the Great Coalition the S.P.D. acquiesced in Herr Kiesinger's Chancellorship. The Social Democratic party of Germany will bear the responsibility for this mistake for a long time to come. Two days before the conclusion of the Great Coalition I wrote Herr Kiesinger an open letter calling his attention to the consequences of his disastrous decision: "How are the young people of our country to find arguments against that party which died two decades ago but is being resurrected today as the N.P.D., if you burden the Chancellorship with the still very considerable weight of your past?"

[3] On this date, the state visit of the Shah of Iran in Berlin occasioned tumultuous student demonstrations during which the German student Ohnesorg was shot by Police Officer Kurras.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If we wish to counter the N.P.D. with something more than the usual verbal appeasements, the parties represented in the Parliament, and first of all the S.P.D., must make up their minds to perform a political act. It is not yet too late to reverse the decision of January 1966. The Federal Republic offers any number of important political jobs that Kurt Georg Kiesinger could fill. But as a member of the National Socialist Party from 1933 to 1945 he should not permit himself, and we should not permit him, to hold the office of Chancellor.

So far, ladies and gentlemen, I have been obliged to concern myself almost exclusively with the extremist camps in this partly political, partly biological conflict. I should much rather speak of the authentic youth protest, which is aimed at reforms and evolutionary changes but finds less and less of a hearing. This is a job for the unions. They can promote discussion between workers and students and so counter the uncompromising extremism that threatens to create a ruinous division among our people. In particular the trade union press, which for years has been serving up tailor-made boredom, should open its ears to new ideas and its columns to the opinions of the young people, however contradictory and disturbing. . . . The young people are no longer willing to assume the debts of their fathers and grandfathers without discussion. The answer to their justified protest is not appeasement but reform.

(2) Czechoslovakia 1968

This Address was delivered on September 8, 1968, *in Basel, Switzerland, and published in* Die Zeit, *October* 4, 1968.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

This is not a protest meeting. Protest is a reaction to the injustice of the day. The injustice remains and the protest dies down. Everyday life starts in again. Czechoslovakia crowded Vietnam out of the news, and now Biafra is taking the place of Czechoslovakia. Meanwhile the papers report earthquakes, presidential elections, more protest meetings, and fluctuations of the stock market.

So it might be a good idea to suspend our reactions to the headlines, which as often as not spring from a mere sense of obligation, to look back—because the occupation of Czechoslovakia is already behind us—and ask a few questions about our own attitude.

The questions are: Why is democratic socialism a matter of importance to us? And: To what extent do we share the responsibility for the failure of democratic socialism?

It would be easy to prove that the applause of once uncompromising Cold Warriors, which rose to a clamor and then turned to telegenic lamentations when Czechoslovakia was occupied, was in part responsible for the Czechoslovakian tragedy.

But this is not the right place or the right audience for a speech about the last Cold War or the next. I am more concerned with the missed opportunities of the European Left, or at least that part of it which regards itself as radical or revolutionary.

For more than a year, ever since the writers Vaculik, Klima, Havel, Kundera, Kohout, and Liehm made their accusing speeches against the neo-Stalinist regime of Antonin Novotny, then still in power, and drafting plans for the future, the revolutionary Western European Left and the growing student protest movement have had ample opportunity to appreciate the daring efforts of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Czechs and Slovaks and to identify themselves with their cause.

But the students of Berlin and Paris did not take Vaculik or Havel as their model; their choice was photogenic and aesthetic: Che Guevara, the Argentine professional revolutionary, was enlarged to pin-up size. In other words: While the Czechoslovakian reformers were trying to put through their reform under the most discouraging conditions and to overcome obstacles which, as we have recently seen, are still insuperable, the Western radical Left—also termed the New Left—indulged in romantic revolutionary gestures. Without a program, expressing itself in a jargon that no one could understand, this Left succeeded in dissipating the protest movement and in provoking the radical Right. The fears aroused by the election returns in Baden-Württemberg were soon fully borne out in France: never has reactionary sentiment been stronger in Western Europe than in the summer of this year.

How could the Stalinist reactionaries in the Soviet Union have been expected to sit still when their conservative brothers in Western Europe were so unmistakably successful? They attacked. The police-state mentalities of the East and West have developed a negative but harmonious coexistence that is well illustrated by the police actions in Berlin and Paris and the action of the occupying powers in Czechoslovakia.

But though the brutality of international power politics is the same everywhere, the Western New Left saw little or no reason to take notice of the New Left in Czechoslovakia, let alone support it. It pursued different and often contrary aims.

While the Czechs and Slovaks were demanding the liberalization of their system and the toleration of disagreement, here in our country tolerance was rejected and liberalism denounced as the mortal enemy of revolution.

While in Prague and Bratislava the theory of reform had immediately to be tested in practice, here reform was slandered as reformism and theory were carried to the point of hair-splitting. Once again, our revolutionaries wanted all or nothing. And the result was: nothing.

While the Czechoslovakian students, writers, and scientists were working in a calm, businesslike way, the Western European Left was indulging in revolutionary dramatics. The New Left in Czechoslovakia has temporarily succumbed to the superior power of reaction; the Western New Left has failed through its own fault and through its inability to understand the lesson of Prague. Its thinking bears a share in the responsibility. Today its former spokesmen are trying, in resignation, to blend with the landscape; nevertheless this indictment will find them.

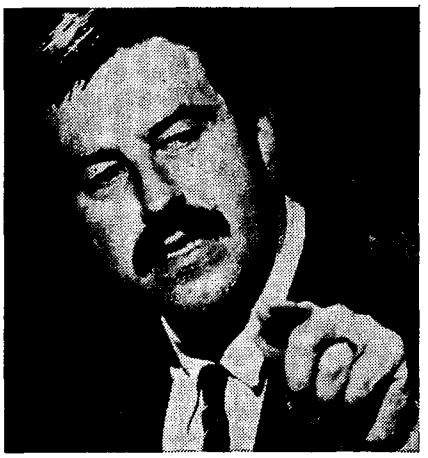
What I have said about the responsibility of the intellectuals of the radical Left does not refer primarily to the minority of radical students, most of them scions of upper-middle-class families, who expanded their protest against their parents into a protest against the Establishment as such; I am referring chiefly to the intellectuals of my own generation, who irresponsibly neglected to give the students the criticism they needed and did their best to participate in the blind activism of a pseudorevolutionary movement.

FOR A WHOLE YEAR I tried, in a series of speeches running parallel to my open correspondence with Pavel Kohout, to draw the attention of students, and of the writers of my generation, to the reform of socialism in Czechoslovakia. With little success. I shall not forget the laughter of the revolutionaries of very substantial family background and the indifference of the revolutionary elite. Nor the arrogance: "Those people lack revolutionary perspective. Why, what this Professor Sik is aiming at is pure liberalism or, still worse, social democracy."

Delegations of the Socialist Student League went to Prague and with Teutonic presumption tried to teach the Czechs and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Günter Grass



SPEAK OUT!

Speeches, Open Letters, Commentaries

Germany's leading writer comments on Czechoslovakia, student violence, elections, and other current political issues. $4.95

Intro. by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

Translated by RALPH MANHEIM

Other books by Günter Grass

Novels

CAT AND MOUSE $3.95
DOG YEARS $6.95

Plays

FOUR PLAYS $4.95
Paperbound ed. $2.45
THE PLEBEIANS REHEARSE THE UPRISING $4.50
Paperbound ed. $1.95

Poems

NEW POEMS $4.50
SELECTED POEMS $3.95

Helen and Kurt Wolff Books

HARCOURT, BRACE & WORLD

Slovaks a little academic Marxism. The polite but secretly disappointed reaction of the Czechoslovakian students to the West German visitors is summed up in the words of a young historian from Charles University in Prague: "They don't know anything, but they know it all." An example: In a collection of articles on "Students and Power," the writer Hans Magnus Enzensberger expresses the following judgment on the Prague student movement: "The documents bear witness to an extremely limited horizon. Their political substance is meager. . . . The German Democratic Republic is regarded as a foreign enemy. If they have any sympathies in their own camp, it is for Rumania and Yugoslavia. The Cuban and Chinese conceptions and experiences are ignored or rejected *en bloc*."

Measured against the demands of Hans Magnus Enzensberger, the Prague attempt at reform was held to be meager and unattractive. In other words, Alexander Dubcek's cautiously formulated program for a democratic socialism could make no headway against the cult of Che Guevara. All mention of a serious, carefully thought-out movement —even then impeded by unavoidable compromises and today interrupted by power politics—was drowned out by rhythmic stamping and in lieu of arguments by loud cries of "Ho Chi Minh!"

Anyone who has ever tried to gain a hearing for the Czechoslovakian attempt at reform knows what brilliant disciples the Josef Goebbels of other days has found among the West European Left-wing radicals of today.

Will the occupation of Czechoslovakia have a sobering effect on the revolutionaries in the exquisite salons of Rome, in the Berlin Republican Club, and in the Paris Latin Quarter? I see no reason whatsoever to embellish the disaster of the West European Left with fronds of hope. This community, verbally so radical, has always sought and found an escape: yesterday it was Cuba; now that Fidel Castro has approved the occupation of Czechoslovakia, Mao remains available free

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of charge. And should this last refuge become untenable, there is always the looking glass: Narcissus always manages to survive. But now that false solidarities have been exposed, perhaps our students will realize what charlatanism they fell for when they saw the future in an obsolete Soviet system, while only a few miles away, in Prague and Bratislava, a first attempt was being made to overcome the bipartite division of the world and to bridge the gulf between Communism and Social Democracy.

If today we ask ourselves whether we can help Czechoslovakia, we should, I believe, dispense with gratuitous gestures of sympathy, and take up the challenge of democratic socialism.

To me as a Social Democrat this means that in the same measure as Communism in Czechoslovakia has been striving for a *rapprochement* with its fellow products of European enlightenment, namely, the fundamental democratic rights, Social Democracy should try to break with its short-sighted concentration on immediate economic ends and develop a modern socialism in which all those who are qualified to do so participate in decisions and responsibilities and so exert a democratic control over the organs of power and the instruments of production. Marx is not an infallible Church Father. The dogmatic exegesis of his works has led to disastrous economic blunders in the People's Republics. Today we know that when basic industry was expropriated in the People's Republics it did not become the property of the people but was handed over to a new owner—the state. But state capitalism is not an alternative to private capitalism. In all the People's Republics state-controlled unions made it impossible from the outset for the workers to participate in industrial management. We ought to be just a little proud of the fact that in the parliamentary democracies the unions have managed to maintain their independence of the state. Let them make use of their independence and answer the call from Prague and Bratislava. If the Czechs and Slovaks with their reform have met the Western socialist parties halfway, the question arises: Do we want to stay in our old rut, or are we too prepared to go halfway?

Recently Willy Brandt, the West German Minister of Foreign Affairs, made a speech in Geneva. He pointed out that it is no longer a question of petty security, of short-term interests and comfortably rising prosperity; his demand for world-wide renunciation of the use of force and his condemnation of all military intervention were uttered at a time when the casualty figures in the various theaters of war are mounting faster than the gross national product. The genocide in Biafra, for which all—and I mean all—social systems bear their share of responsibility, is the most terrifying consequence of East-West power politics: English and Soviet, Swiss and Czechoslovakian, Portuguese and French arms are competing on African soil—an inhuman expression of what might still cynically be called "aid to underdeveloped countries."

Now that Czechoslovakian socialism, despite its temporary repression, has become a world-wide necessity, it is to be hoped that it will see its first tasks in the co-ordination of Eastern and Western aid to underdeveloped countries. First of all, it is incumbent on the Socialist and Social Democratic parties of Western Europe to give content to the thus far empty concept of coexistence by putting forward a program for co-ordinated aid that will put an end to the power-political competition between East and West.

Two overfed world powers have converted stupidity into armored divisions and atomic warheads. And we sit in-between, permanently threatened by the good-natured pats on the back of one or the other giant. At last we have understood the lesson of Prague.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Beverly Woodward

Nuremberg Law and U.S. Courts

The Court: You see the case, Mr. Mitchell, as far as the law is concerned, is a relatively simple case. . . .
Defendant Mitchell: I do not agree that the issues of my defense are clearcut and simple. I think they involve many things—Nuremberg trials, international law, conventions on war crimes and torture and genocide, et cetera. . . .
Mr. Owens [prosecutor]: . . . . I think we could get far afield if we are allowed to introduce various philosophies, etc. that are not pertinent to the case.

—From *Transcript of Proceedings, U.S. vs. David Henry Mitchell, III.* U.S. District Court, District of Connecticut, Sept. 8, 13-15, 1965.

IT HAS BEEN over three years since the young draft resister, David Henry Mitchell, III, launched his effort to persuade our courts to enforce the principles of international law proclaimed at Nuremberg. Unfortunately, that effort has not been a particularly successful one. Nor have the subsequent legal battles, initiated by others who believe American action in Vietnam to be in violation of international law, had much greater success. True, in the cases of Captain Howard Levy and of the Fort Hood Three, American courts did take some steps toward confronting the extremely important questions first raised by Mitchell. We now know that not every judge in the land (when faced with a case of noncooperation with the military) will brush aside a defense based on the Nuremberg Charter and judgment with the label of "irrelevant." But we have yet to see anything like a "full-scale" Nuremberg defense presented to and weighed by either a civilian or a military court. Nor is this surprising. The obstacles, both political and legal, to such a "self-judgment" of the nation seem to many insurmountable. In fact, one can conclude without contradiction that the issues raised by Mitchell were altogether "relevant" to his defense and yet not justiciable in our courts or for that matter in any existing court. Such a conclusion is admittedly not very satisfying. One is not inclined to let the matter rest there; for it indicates that our constitutional system is, for the time being at least, incapable of coming to grips with the central problems of our time.

Before reaching conclusions, let me state the problem. Although the cases of David Mitchell, Captain Levy, and the Fort Hood Three are quite familiar in some circles, it is probably true that the details of these cases are not widely known. What, then, did these men contend and how did our courts respond to their contentions? And what links these three cases together?

The second question can be answered with one word: Nuremberg. At the end of World War II the United States and its allies (calling themselves the United Nations) made an agreement to try the "major war criminals of the European Axis countries." Though numerous observers considered the Nuremberg trials nothing better than examples of the vengeance that the victor will wreak upon the vanquished, supporters of the trials held quite different views. In their eyes the trials were an effort to establish firmly certain principles of international law which had been proclaimed or implied in declarations and treaties made between the two world wars, but which until that time had not been enforced. The major principle to be established was that the initiation and the waging of an aggressive war constituted crimes under in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ternational law, and that these were crimes for which individuals could be held accountable. As America's representative Mr. Justice Jackson said at the time:

> Repeatedly, nations have united in abstract declarations that the launching of an aggressive war is illegal. They have condemned it by treaty. But now we have the concrete application of these abstractions. . . . [And he declared further that] if certain acts in violations of treaties are crimes, they are crimes whether the United States does them or whether Germany does them, and we are not prepared to lay down a rule of criminal conduct against others which we would not be willing to have invoked against us.

The cases of David Mitchell, Captain Levy, and the Fort Hood Three, then, involved three attempts to test the force of Justice Jackson's declaration. They all were attempts to show that the United States' actions in Vietnam render it guilty of one or more of the three categories of crimes enumerated by the Charter of the Nuremberg tribunal: crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. In each case the contention was proffered as a defense against a charge of having refused to obey some order: Mitchell had refused to report for induction, Captain Levy had refused to train medics in the United States Special Forces, and the three Army privates known as the Fort Hood Three had refused to board a plane bound for Vietnam. (The last case is complicated because it involves both a suit and a court-martial. The three men were ordered to board the plane shortly after having brought a suit against the Army to prevent it from shipping them to Vietnam; the Army's action thus resulted in their being court-martialed before their suit could be heard.)

As might be imagined, such contentions did not receive a friendly hearing in our courts. In fact, it was only Captain Levy who was allowed to present evidence to support his position (and that evidence was later held to be insufficient to prove his claims).[1] In the case of the court-martial of the Fort Hood Three the Army law officer ruled out of order the argument that the war in Vietnam is illegal with the statement: "I rule that it is a matter of law, that the war in Vietnam is legal, and I forbid you to argue that it isn't." Mitchell was also not allowed to present evidence supporting his contentions as to the nature of the war. Instead, he was told that such evidence was "immaterial and irrelevant" as a defense to the charge brought against him. In a self-justifying statement issued after Mitchell's first trial, the judge expressed himself on this matter rather strongly. He said:

> Leaving aside the sickening spectacle of a 22-year-old citizen of the United States seizing the sanctuary of a nation dedicated to freedom of speech to assert such tommyrot and leaving aside the transparency of his motives for doing so, the decisive point is that such political or philosophical views, even if sincerely entertained, are utterly irrelevant as a defense to the charge of willful refusal to report for induction in the armed forces of the United States. . . .

Nevertheless, Mitchell and the Fort Hood Three (Dennis Mora, David Samas, and James Johnson) were given some support when their cases reached the Supreme Court. Although the Court refused to review these cases, the decisions were not unanimous. In

[1] Captain Levy (unlike the defendants in the other cases mentioned here) charged the government not with crimes against peace or crimes against humanity, but with war crimes. Of the three categories of crimes enumerated in the Nuremberg Charter, this category was the most firmly established in international law. Moreover, there exists in national military law the necessary "machinery" for prosecuting individual military men who are believed to have committed a war crime. This may account in part for the fact that Captain Levy was permitted to raise the "war crimes" issue. However, his accusation was not that certain individuals were guilty of committing war crimes, but that the government was supporting the commission of war crimes *as a matter of policy*. Clearly the political obstacles to holding that such a charge is correct are much greater than in the case involving the individual military man.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mitchell's case Mr. Justice Douglas dissented, and when the suit instituted by the Fort Hood Three reached the Supreme Court Mr. Justice Stewart added his dissent to that of Justice Douglas. In the Mitchell case Mr. Justice Douglas presented a list of five questions which he contended the Court was called upon to answer in spite of their "extremely sensitive and delicate" nature. These questions were:

> (1) whether the Treaty of London [which includes the Charter of the Nuremberg tribunal] is a treaty within the meaning of Art. VI, cl. 2 [of our constitution]; (2) whether the question as to the waging of an aggressive "war" is in the context of this criminal prosecution a justiciable question; (3) whether the Vietnam episode is a "war" in the sense of the Treaty; (4) whether petitioner has standing to raise the question; (5) whether, if he has, it may be tendered as a defense in this criminal case or in amelioration of punishment.
>
> [In addition Justice Douglas stated] There is a considerable body of opinion that our actions in Vietnam constitute the waging of an aggressive "war," . . . . Even those who think that the Nuremberg judgments were unconstitutional by our guarantee relating to *ex post facto* laws would have to take a different view of the Treaty of London that purports to lay down a standard of future conduct for all the signatories.

When Mr. Justice Stewart dissented from the refusal to hear the case of the Fort Hood Three, he said: "There exist in this case questions of great magnitude. Some are akin to those referred to by Mr. Justice Douglas in Mitchell *v.* United States. . ." (Then he went on to mention certain other questions in the case, questions relating to the constitutionality of an undeclared war.) In sum, both justices agreed that the question of the war's status under international law, and particularly with reference to the principles enunciated and enforced at Nuremberg, was a question of the first importance for the judiciary.

But even though this question and others related to it are without doubt of the first importance, it is questionable whether the judiciary can at present come to grips with them in any kind of satisfactory way. Some of the principal difficulties involved are discussed below.

THE CENTRAL CONTENTION of the defendants in the cases I am discussing was that they would be guilty of complicity in crime if they obeyed the particular order that had been issued to each of them. But that contention had an obverse side. At the same time they asserted that the orders issued to them were *invalid,* principally on the grounds that it is a violation of due process to compel any individual to commit an illegal act.[2] Theirs were therefore cases of what I have elsewhere labeled "civil challenge." That is, they all had violated some command on the grounds that the command was without validity and they had done so with the hope of being vindicated in the courts and thereby influencing public policy. If they had won their cases, the effect would have been considerable. Mitchell, for example, sought nothing less than to bring the war in Vietnam to an end by having the draft declared invalid when used as an instrument in the prosecution of that war

Already the problems begin to manifest themselves. They are both of a technical and a political nature. First, the political problems: Can the judiciary which has neither the power of "the sword or the purse" effectively bring a war to an end? Can it even exert an

[2] In addition, some defendants, such as Mitchell, have argued that even though a given command does not create complicity in crime, it may still be invalid if it results from or supports action which is in violation of the Constitution and/or of international law.

Professor Roger Fisher of the Harvard Law School has suggested to me that it is plausible to argue that a command or law is invalid if it places the individual in the position of committing an illegal act, whether he obeys the law or command or whether he disobeys it. This, in effect, was the position taken by the defendants in the cases being discussed.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

effective impact on the way in which an ongoing war is conducted? What would be the actual result of a ruling by the Supreme Court favorable to the defendant in a case such as one of these? Would the Executive acquiesce to a ruling which crippled its powers to wage a particular war or would we have chaos and a breakdown of civil order?

It is difficult to answer such questions before the event. They do, however, make understandable the efforts of our courts, and particularly the Supreme Court, to avoid making the experiment. The Court has recently suffered a barrage of abuse for actions and judgments that were considerably less adventurous. Not that action by the Court is impossible. But I do wish to indicate that no matter how compelling a case might be made that the United States is involved in an aggressive and illegal war, the Court might hesitate a long moment before making such a ruling.

The technical problems have to do with definitions. To ascertain the existence of complicity in a crime, one must be able to define the crime and to define what constitutes complicity in it. In this case that means having criteria for determining the existence of the three kinds of crime enumerated in the Nuremberg Charter and having criteria for identifying complicity in such crimes. But such criteria are lacking. Mitchell, for example, argued that since the armed forces are engaged in at least one illegal enterprise (whatever their other activities may be), he would be guilty of complicity were he even to submit to induction. His critics, on the other hand, argue that no ordinary soldier was tried at Nuremberg. Individual responsibility was meant to apply only to the leaders, not to run-of-the-mill draftees (let alone to draftees who didn't even fight in the war).

Yet Mitchell could reply:

> That's what they did at that trial. How do I know what they will do at the next one? Let's look at the statement of the "Nuremberg Principles,"[3] as formulated by the International Law Commission of the United Nations. They state that "complicity in a crime against peace . . . is a crime under international law," and they include in their definition of a crime against peace the "waging of a war of aggression. . . ." I don't see them saying anywhere that only those in the highest positions are capable of "waging a war of aggression."[4]

Mitchell's assertion that he might be guilty of complicity if he accepted induction into the Army was complemented by his assertion that the order to report for induction was invalid. It was invalid, he argued in part, because the draft is at present an essential instrument in the prosecution of an illegal war. The United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, which made the final ruling in Mitchell's case, replied to this argument by stating that "whatever action the President may order, or the Congress sanction," cannot impair the constitutional power of Congress to raise and support armed forces.

The Court's ruling, though, seems altogether too sweeping. Do the judges really mean *whatever* action the President may order? Or would they concede that the "Nuremberg Principles" support the *legal* correctness of the position of the young man who refused to go into Hitler's army (apart from the assumed moral correctness of his position)? If so, then is it correct to say that the President may order the armed forces to commit *any action whatsoever* without impairing Congress's constitutional power to draft an army? Was not Mitchell correct when he said, " 'Providing for the common defense' is not a license for crime. . . ," implying that a power which is used in that way must perhaps be revoked?

---

[3] The "Nuremberg Principles" were formulated by the International Law Commission at the request of the United Nations General Assembly. They are considered by many commentators to be highly authoritative guides with regard to the international legal obligations of the individual.

[4] A draft resister might also argue, and Mitchell did, that he should not be compelled to contribute to an illegal enterprise whether or not he might be held guilty of complicity for doing so.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Of course, it is possible that the United States is not involved in an aggressive war and it is possible that even if it is, that fact would not be sufficient grounds for invalidating the draft. But that does not eliminate the theoretical problems that Mitchell has raised.[5] *If* American actions in Vietnam are aggressive and illegal, then there must be some orders which are invalid (either because they result from or support unconstitutional action or because they create complicity). And there must be some who are accomplices.

Perhaps the Fort Hood Three were right in drawing the line at the point when they were ordered to go to Vietnam. Or perhaps it is at some later point of involvement that one becomes an accomplice. In any case the courts have failed so far to provide any kind of satisfactory criteria, and so have the jurists who formulated the "Nuremberg Principles."

Efforts to provide authoritative definitions of the crimes enumerated in the Nuremberg Charter have fared no better than efforts to define complicity in those crimes. Those who have followed the proceedings of the United Nations are well aware that there is no agreement concerning the meaning of the term "aggression." It is less well known, yet equally true, that the terms "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity" also have been given widely varying interpretations. It is apparent that only a few scholars wish to define these terms as precisely as possible. Those who are politically active prefer to use them—and abuse them—for polemical purposes.

In fact, if we think about it for a moment it becomes evident that the difficulties I have been calling technical are in reality largely political. Definitions of political crimes have to be politically acceptable definitions. Unfortunately, existing political realities militate against the acceptance of common definitions just as much as they do against the application of such definitions. These realities have probably not been given sufficient attention by those who view Nuremberg law as valid and enforceable international law. But to make that clear requires that we consider the situation in which the Nuremberg trials came to be and the presuppositions of those who most strongly supported the trials.

HOWEVER JUSTIFIED the Nuremberg trials may have been, they undoubtedly constituted an unprecedented step in modern legal history. This unprecedentedness of the trials was the main source of the many objections raised against them, objections to which I have alluded earlier. Although it was true that, between the wars, there had been many solemn declarations condemning the resort to war and the Kellogg-Briand Pact was supposed to have "outlawed" war, nevertheless the notion of individual accountability for launching or waging an aggressive war had certainly never before been clearly formulated. Nor had certain of the crimes listed in the Charter of the tribunal been recognized or clearly defined before that time. For these reasons the defendants and many others declared that those tried were the victims of *ex post facto* legislation. But others argued that when men commit deeds which are without precedent yet at the same time horrendous and clearly criminal in nature, then special procedures are required if justice is to be done. That provided a justification for the punishment of those involved in the crime of genocide, but not for the punishment of those responsible for initiating a war of aggression, since wars of aggression had often occurred in the past. Here the justification was formulated in terms of the necessities of the future. Many argued that war itself had become a crime against

[5] In a recent dissent—written for the case of *O'Brien v. U.S.* (88 S. Ct. 1673)—Mr. Justice Douglas questioned whether the constitutionality of conscription is in all cases beyond question. He specifically questioned the constitutionality of the draft in the absence of a declaration of war by Congress. What Mitchell contended was that the draft might also be unconstitutional when used to help fight a war of aggression.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mankind. To some extent this had been recognized even before World War II and the advent of nuclear weapons. But now it was clearly essential that the renunciation of aggression become a serious thing. Therefore, individual responsibility for the initiation and conduct of aggressive war must be firmly declared and established. On this basis, then, the Nuremberg trials took place. It was, as Conrad Lynn declared in a brief written for Mitchell, "an important moment in legality's desperate attempt to keep abreast of morality."

Many writers stressed, though, that Nuremberg could only be justified by the future. Only if the victors and enforcers of justice at Nuremberg showed themselves ready to submit to the same principles which they had proclaimed, only if an international criminal jurisdiction were created would Nuremberg show itself to have been a worthwhile precedent. No one was more insistent that the Nuremberg trials should have this *general* significance and should mark the beginning of a fundamentally different international order than Mr. Justice Jackson, who was largely responsible for the wording of the Charter and the establishment of the International Military Tribunal and who later acted as Chief American Prosecutor at the trials.[6]

But the hopes of Justice Jackson and other supporters of Nuremberg have yet to be fulfilled. There exists no International Criminal Court, and each of the powers which sat in judgment at the International Military Tribunal has since been involved in actions which might be considered aggressive—the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, France in Indochina, Britain at the Suez Canal, the United States in Vietnam. Whenever one of these powers' so-called vital interests has been involved, considerations of international law have not restrained it. The inability of the international community to agree on a definition of aggression is an important symptom of this situation. Only too often one nation's aggression turns out to be another nation's "legitimate self-defense" or "legitimate support of self-defense."

Yet if we consider the fact that the nation-state remained the dominant political reality after World War II, and if we consider at the same time some of the implications of the "Nuremberg Principles," then this outcome will seem almost inevitable. For if read carefully, these principles can only be viewed as "subversive" of the authority of the nation-state. Consider Principles II, III, and IV as formulated by the International Law Commission:

II—The fact that internal law does not impose a penalty for an act which constitutes a crime under international law does not relieve the person who committed the act from responsibility under international law.

III—The fact that a person who committed an act which constitutes a crime under international law acted as Head of State or responsible government official does not relieve him from responsibility under international law.

IV—The fact that a person acted pursuant to order of his Government or of a superior does not relieve him from responsibility under international law, provided a moral choice was in fact possible to him.

These principles in effect assert the supremacy of international law over national law.[7] Consequently, the failure of national authorities to take the steps necessary to

[6] At the time of the signing of the agreement to try the European war criminals, Justice Jackson stated: "The definitions under which we will try the Germans are *general* definitions. They impose liability upon war-making statesmen of *all* countries alike. . . . If we can cultivate in the world the idea that aggressive war-making is the way to the prisoner's dock rather than the way to honors, we will have accomplished something toward making the peace more secure." (Emphasis added.)

[7] This point was made explicit in the judgment of the International Military Tribunal when it declared that "the very essence of the Charter is that individuals have international duties which transcend the national obligations of obedience imposed by the individual state."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

render these principles effective is hardly astonishing.

Nevertheless, in the United States there has been some governmental recognition of these principles, probably mainly as a result of the key role played by this country in bringing about the Nuremberg trials. Section 511 of the current *Army Field Manual* (No. 27–10) states that "the fact that domestic law does not impose a penalty for an act which constitutes a crime under international law does not relieve the person who committed the act from responsibility under international law." As can easily be seen, this is an almost exact repetition of Principle II as framed by the International Law Commission. That individuals have duties under international law has also been affirmed by the Supreme Court, notably in *Ex parte Quirin,* which was cited in the Nuremberg judgment. But it is necessary to remark that this case involved enemy saboteurs, not citizens of our own country. And while it is all very well to state that individuals have responsibilities under international law, that cannot be considered enough as long as the supremacy of international law over national law in cases of conflict is not explicitly established.

This supremacy certainly cannot be said to be established in the United States. The Constitution states, as Mitchell stressed, that treaties are part of the law of the land (Article VI), but it is now an accepted judicial doctrine that Congress may annul a treaty by later legislation, even without action by other parties to the treaty. And in *Reid v. Covert* the Supreme Court declared: "This Court has regularly and uniformly recognized the supremacy of the Constitution over a treaty . . . [since to do otherwise] would permit amendment of that document in a manner not sanctioned by Article V." (In a moment I shall point out the difficulty that is hereby created in the case of the Treaty of London.) As for customary international law, it is not evident that it stands on any higher footing. In the often quoted case of the *Paquete Habana* the Supreme Court stated:

> International law is part of our law, and must be ascertained and administered by the courts of justice of appropriate jurisdiction, as often as questions of right depending upon it are duly presented for their determination. For this purpose, where there is no treaty, *and no controlling executive or legislative act or judicial decision,* resort must be had to the customs and usages of civilized nations. . . .[8] (Emphasis supplied.)

This statement hardly seems to confer any more authority on custom or usage than that granted by Chief Justice Marshall in 1814 when he asserted in *Brown v. United States:*

> This argument [that it might require an act of the legislature to justify the condemnation of property which according to modern international usage ought not to be confiscated] must assume for its basis the position that modern usage constitutes a rule which acts directly upon the thing itself by its own force, and not through the sovereign power. This power is not allowed. This usage is a guide which the sovereign follows or abandons at his will.

In view of the seemingly subservient status of customary international law and of treaties, it seems possible that the United States was not really "free" to enter into Nuremberg, in spite of Justice Jackson's no doubt sincere declaration that this country would feel itself bound by the same laws it was applying to the Germans. For the Nuremberg Charter appears to supersede all national constitutions insofar as it rules out the defenses of "act of state" and of "superior orders." To adhere to Nuremberg might involve disobeying constitutionally valid orders

[8] Brierly in *The Law of Nations* quotes from the decision in the case of *Over the Top* (5 Federal Reporter, 838): "International practice is law only in so far as we adopt it, and like all common or statute law it bends to the will of Congress." He goes on to remark that "there is, however, a presumption that neither Parliament nor Congress will intend to violate international law. . . ." That presumption, however, is likely to be ill-founded at times.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unless a constitutional amendment made it clear that Nuremberg Law was to take precedence in cases of conflict and that only Nuremberg Law would be valid in such cases. But no such amendment has been passed.[9]

THE SHAKY STATUS of international law in our domestic legal system is not the only source of the difficulties involved in making Nuremberg law effective.[10] Even if our courts were clearly required to give international law precedence, there would still remain the problem of insuring the enforcement of judicial decrees based on international law. For example, in order to protect a David Mitchell or the Fort Hood Three or Captain Levy against the injury caused by the illegal actions of the United States government, it would be necessary for the Supreme Court to have the capacity to restrain the other branches of our government in matters that are considered vital. This can be a hazardous undertaking for the Court. As Hamilton stated in *The Federalist,* the judiciary "must ultimately depend upon the aid of the executive arm . . . for the efficacy of its judgments."

When it is the executive arm itself which has gone beyond the law, the Court finds itself in an awkward position. This is particularly true when the delict involved is as large-scale an affair as a war. Either the Court can officially shut its eyes and ignore the illegalities that are occurring, a course which may eventually undermine its authority, or it can attempt to intervene and risk provoking a severe internal crisis and perhaps a more rapid loss of its authority. This may truly be said to be a Scylla-and-Charybdis situation for the Court and yet one that is seemingly unavoidable.

A further problem is created for the Court by the fact that its rulings, if heeded and enforced, can affect directly only the government of which it forms a part. A war may involve breaches of international law by both sides, yet a national court has a rather limited capacity to affect the total context in which the illegalities perpetrated by its own side are occurring. National courts are likely to view this fact as adding to the risks of judicial intervention.

A final problem concerns the wording of the Charter and the "Principles" themselves. Both these documents manifest a crucial structural defect: these documents clearly state that individuals have duties under international law, but at the same time fail to create corresponding rights for the protection of the individual who is trying to carry out these duties. In the Shimoda case, initiated by the victims of the atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the District Court of Tokyo stated in its decision: "It is still proper to understand that individuals are not the subject of rights in international law, unless it is concretely recognized by treaties. . . ." Unfortunately, the Treaty of London (which, as I have stated, included the Charter of the International Military Tribunal) did not proclaim the existence of such individual rights, let alone establish a procedure whereby the individual could assert these rights and receive effective protection if they were being infringed upon. Nor has this defect

[9] A remark by the law officer in the trial of Captain Levy indicated his uncertainty as to what exactly the relation is between Nuremberg law and American domestic law: "Well, as you must realize, this question is pretty much wide open. But it seemed to me from my reading of the instructions to the judges in Nuremberg that, since obedience to a superior was not a defense if the order required the commission of crimes against humanity—although those instructions did not so provide—it would seem to me that an ordinary extrapolation of that rule would in domestic law provide a defense although I have no precedent." The problem concerns just what sort of "extrapolation" should be allowed.

[10] There is only one national constitution which clearly grants superior status to international law as it affects individuals; not surprisingly that is the constitution of West Germany. It provides that "general rules of international law shall form part of federal law" and that such rules "shall take precedence over the laws and create rights and duties directly for the inhabitants of the federal territory."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

since been corrected. Nuremberg law, therefore, may by its very terms claim to supersede our Constitution and all national constitutions; yet it provides no internationally guaranteed rights for the protection of individuals against orders of their national government that run counter to the declared international obligations of the individual.[11]

It can be seen, then, that great difficulties surround the enforcement of Nuremberg law. Indeed, this discussion of the obstacles has hardly been exhaustive; but it need not be in order to make my point. It should be clear that as things stand, Nuremberg law must be applied through the medium of the nation-state and that this is a medium likely to prove both recalcitrant and ineffective.

There remains, however, the question of the significance of this conclusion. Does it really matter that Nuremberg has thus far proven to be an ineffective precedent? Perhaps the whole enterprise was unrealistic in the first place. Perhaps "legality's desperate attempt to keep abreast of morality" cannot possibly succeed under contemporary conditions.

Naturally, the individuals who have tried to make a legal case against the war in Vietnam do not want to accept such judgments as correct. It is all very well for theorists and philosophers to show, even to "prove," that morality, legality, and politics have little in common with one another—for the intellect generally finds pleasure in making distinctions. The results are quite different, however, for the individual whose life is a life of action and who seeks to act with coherence and integrity. Even if he recognizes that the law has certain necessary limitations as an enforcer and creator of morality, he will resist the notion that the law must necessarily be an enforcer and creator of gross immorality. If the law cannot help him to be good, at least it should not compel him to do evil—and penalize him when he resists.

It can be granted, of course, that the law may sometimes run athwart certain versions of God's commands. Theologically defined notions of the good may not conform to notions of the good as defined politically. But it is not this conflict which is crucial at present to the conscientious individual. What troubles him is that the laws of the world, that is, the laws arising from the nation-state "security" system, seem, when considered in their totality, actually to work against some of man's primary political needs. Rather than creating stability and providing a framework within which there would be at least some hope of harmonious living-together, these laws seem almost to guarantee chaos and destruction.

American resisters, therefore, believe that it is necessary to challenge our government. It is a government which is wont to speak in moral terms and to justify its actions in moral terms. It is, in a word, a self-righteous government. To be sure, the resisters themselves have been accused of speaking in self-righteous and pious terms; but their language is perhaps a natural and inevitable reflection of the kind of language they have heard for so long. In any case, the resisters do not wish to abdicate the moral-political debate. They do not advocate the divorce of morality and politics or of morality and legality. Instead, they challenge the government to allow that debate to take place in a meaningful way within our existing legal and political institutions. If that is not possible, and they strongly suspect that it is not, then they insist that it is their right to try to create new institutions and new standards of legitimacy.

[11] This lack may not nullify the obligations proclaimed at Nuremberg and in the "Principles," but it does put in question their binding quality. As Wolfgang Friedmann has stated: "An international law of the individual must surely comprise both rights and duties."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nicola Chiaromonte

On Modern Tyranny

A Critique of Western Intellectuals

RECENTLY, CONFRONTED by the renewed repression of intellectual life in the Soviet Union and the rebellious movements in Czechoslovakia and Poland, the following argument has often been repeated in conversation and advanced in the press:

> *The protest of intellectuals and students in the countries of the East concerns partial demands—greater freedom of speech, a less strict political regime, a more efficient management of the economy—demands which, among* us *in the West, have become obsolete. The* system, *that is, the socialist regime, is not being put in question. On the contrary, among us the New Left rejects (in the current jargon the word is* confronts) *the* system—*that is, neocapitalism or the consumer civilization—in a radical fashion. Thus the revolt fermenting in the West is more* advanced *than the basically romantic and 19th-century one, which agitates the countries of Eastern Europe.*

This argument deserves to be examined in some detail. Apart from its intrinsic value, which will be judged separately, it reflects quite accurately the point which a certain mentality has reached in Europe and elsewhere; it also reflects the point reached, among intellectuals, in their feeling for freedom and their awareness of the fundamental ideals of the "associated" life in society.*

Finally, the examination of this argument also allows us—a far from negligible advantage—to broach the problem of modern tyranny, isolating its specific form and weighing the justifications presented in its support. The problem involves not only the countries of Eastern Europe but also, and perhaps even to a greater degree, those of the West, where tyranny hides behind various names, not excluding the name of "democracy."

We should note above all the surreptitious, certainly obscure (and therefore all the more symptomatic) will to ignore the real significance of the ferment of the intellectual classes in Eastern Europe. True enough, this ferment is concentrated on the question of freedom, indeed pure and simple freedom: freedom from oppression. But "freedom" for Russian intellectuals and students, as for Czechs and Poles, means not only freedom of speech, press, and assembly (which in itself would not be little, indeed it would be almost everything). The demand for freedom on the part of these intellectuals means the rejection and denunciation of Stalinist terror and its methods, and therefore the demand for a formal and effective legality that would embrace the relations between the government and its citizens. And it means quite obviously, even if not always explicitly, an almost global confrontation of the prime characteristic of the regime, which consists in opposition on principle to any juridical, that is, objective and stable, limitation of the exercise of its power.

Moreover, this demand for freedom in the countries of the East signifies an explicit demand for a "socialist democracy" or, in substance, the dissolution of that single party

* The author uses the phrase "associated life" to suggest all those gratuitous, spontaneous, friendly relations among men in society, outside the framework of the state and often despite the state. He believes that these relations are the living nucleus of all social life and that their persistence, in the face of regimentation and all forms of tyranny, accounts for whatever is left of gracious, polite, humanistic values in all spheres, from the depths of everyday life to the summits of art and culture.—*Translator's Note.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that remains the fundamental pillar on which the regime rests—indeed, the basis of all these states and the first obstacle to serious reform. There is no one, save for Western intellectuals, who does not see the capital significance of such a demand, which implies a truly new and "global" fact, namely, the rebirth of the problem of pure and simple, and let us also say it, formal freedom, where people had thought it could be replaced by that of the famous "concrete freedoms." In other words, in the test of events one sees that between so-called abstract freedom and so-called concrete freedom, one has either a propagandistic play on words or no difference at all.

Rather than "obsolete" demands, privileges of the intellectual class, secondary or partial reforms, what seems to be at stake in the countries of the East is a fundamental political protest, even if one can express oneself only in the secrecy of small groups, and even if that protest remains partly veiled by nationalistic motives. The important thing is that the demand persists, despite the repeated repressions and the great difficulties imposed by the objective situation.

Let us admit, however, that to us Westerners the sentencing of writers for having written what they felt and thought, the expulsion of professors from their jobs for crimes of opinion, the methods of ideological intimidation and the use of arbitrary police power with which the satellite governments proceed to "put on the brakes"—all these methods produce the spectral effect of a resurrection of the repressive methods common to the absolute monarchies of the 19th century, from the Russian Czars to the Hapsburgs, and from the Hapsburgs to the Bourbons. Besides, it seems to us that these methods are doubly antiquated: on the one hand, because borrowed from the arsenal of defunct police states, and on the other, since they do not have the character of the systematic terror of the not-too-distant past and are applied to repress more than to crush, they cannot possibly, in the long run, prove to be effective. They are, it seems, forms of resistance or temporizing, when confronted by a social situation that boils up every day more threateningly and will end by bursting through the dikes.

The situation in Eastern Europe, therefore, appears similar to that which classically seems to mark the history of the 19th century. It recalls Tocqueville's remark: "There is nothing worse than a bad government that tries to correct itself." Which is to say that for such a government the temptation until the decisive crisis will always be to react with force to the increasing momentum of demands which, hesitating continually between concession and repression, the government itself will have fomented. But in the end, one believes, it will have to yield. This, unfortunately, is not so certain as one might think when one refers to the examples of the past century, probably worthless for our time, or valid only up to a certain point. Yet it remains true that when one asks for freedom, one asks for everything: this "confrontation" is truly global and does not involve class or corporation privileges, but the very form of the associated life.

For this very reason—just because it is a question of freedom, the freedom he thinks he owns as if it were a piece of furniture—the Western intellectual, faced by the movement of protest in the countries of Eastern Europe, believes he is watching something already well-known and so not really significant. Hence the widespread general idea that the ferment for freedom which is shaking these countries, although it merits our sympathy, does not at bottom concern us, since it is a matter of gaining a social benefit which we already enjoy—indeed, among us, by dint of using it, is already worn-out and cheapened. We need something else: stronger medicines, one would say. Or drugs. Or systematic violence.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AT THIS POINT one must ask whether such a method of argumentation does not conceal a very real "comedy of intellectual errors." Among those who have been deprived of it with an unexampled severity, it has been discovered simply that freedom is the indispensable nourishment of the associated life, whatever its political form may be. By rediscovering this, they put in question not so much and not only the so-called "socialist" regime, but the very conception of socialism as the overwhelming victory of "Marxism-Leninism" has fixed it in the minds of the majority of people: that is, the idea according to which socialism is reduced to the statification of the economy, and therefore a rigidly centralized political system all the more oppressive insofar as it claims to be striving toward the realization of a universal goal, in fact the unlimited reign of freedom.

On the other hand, in the societies that enjoy a more or less well-ordered freedom, the intellectuals declare the most rigid forms of socialization and centralized power to be an ideal which they oppose to the "consumers' civilization" and as a remedy for the "alienation" of contemporary man. In reality, this is a negative, indeed nihilistic ideal since, to begin with, it does not even lead to the serious acceptance of the type of regime it professes to admire.

What should be asked, when one is faced by this "comedy of errors," is whether the real crisis of Western society does not consist precisely in the fact that the intellectual class, while it claims to guide toward the new, in reality no longer knows what freedom is or what socialism is or can be; nor even, simply, what the word "society" means. The facile protest against a "consumers' society" which one enjoys, whose advantages one does not intend to renounce (and to which, moreover, one does not see what the alternative could be once one has accepted the premise of an industrial society) could conceal a misapprehension involving not only and not so much politics as the very value of life and human works. The "consumers' civilization," in its apparent absurdity and lack of goals other than material ones, actually expresses and symbolizes a misapprehension from which springs the impulse that leads a great part of the intellectuals and the young to a kind of gratuitous rebellion, bereft of true reasons as well as true aims, and of which we have begun to have striking examples among us here in Italy, too.

We have, therefore, in the East a socialism put in doubt by events, where the doubt as to socialism is accompanied by a vigorous upsurge of the demand for political freedom; in the West we have an "obsolete freedom" accompanied by a rather crude idealization of exotic governments, such as, for example, Maoism.

What does such an intellectual misunderstanding mean? It means that we in the West no longer know what freedom is, are not concerned to know it, and in fact are more or less of the opinion that political freedom (but moral freedom too, and with it the dignity of man in and of itself) is a sort of commodity: one commodity among others that our advanced society lavishes on us and which we make use of because it is there, as we use the automobile or the washing machine because they are there. Still, if freedom weren't, the evil would not be so great. Perhaps, at least for the majority, it would be less important than that evil caused by the disappearance of the auto and washing machine. Provided, of course, the intellectuals—and especially the literati and artists —could continue to enjoy the privilege of writing, publishing, and producing whatever they pleased.

For (and here is the crux of the matter) it is intellectuals—literati in particular, though with a broad participation of the representatives of high and middle culture—who present the argument that says that the more or less violent revolt now spreading in the Western countries represents a more advanced

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

political movement than the reformism of the countries of the East. And not only this. But it is also the intellectuals who today follow all the extremisms, whether political, literary, or artistic. Their motive, both turbid and grotesque, is the great motive of not missing the train (or plane) of the future and of finding oneself at the head of the tumult of the young; and the more violent the tumult is, the more they consider it promising, in the same way that, in the sphere of letters and the arts, the more incoherent the words, the more tortuous the forms and the more disordered the ideas, the more they find them "new."

Yet it would not be true to say that the majority of intellectuals in the West now make common cause with the rebels. By and large they make common cause with the established, recognized interests, whether these be the powers of the state or of the most active parties and political groups. In reality, what they yearn for above all is to be recognized as purveyors of ideas to these powers and movements. In short, they want to occupy the position of those who in the past were called "the prince's advisers." And it does not much matter whether the "prince" is actually installed in power or is merely considered the probable successor of the presently reigning prince. Indeed, this last position naturally enjoys greater prestige than the other, and to become identified with it is much more fashionable.

The sole condition which the intellectual in the West does not seem, nowadays, to consider attractive is that of independence. In fact, independence would mean isolation, isolation would mean that one is outside History, flotsam abandoned on the shore of the great currents of events, and therefore by definition in the wrong: *dans les ténèbres extérieures,* as the French phrase effectively puts it.

In other words, the paradox we are faced with today is that the European intellectual, who, at least from the 17th century on, has represented, at times at the price of martyrdom, the critical spirit and the demand for freedom, finds himself today, insofar as he is the member of a class, playing the role of theoretician (or, worse, glorifier) of accomplished facts. It is even more symptomatic that these accomplished facts are not only of a political order but also literary, artistic, ideological, and, more generally, social. In sum, because he wishes to be part of the avant-garde, the contemporary intellectual finds himself functioning as the fulcrum of conformism, a manipulator of ready-made ideas, hostile by his very situation to that mission of spokesman of doubt and heresy which used to be his pride. Along with this, he has become the best and most useful instrument of modern tyranny, whatever name the tyranny may bear.

THIS PARADOX is worth unraveling. To examine it more effectively, it would be best to return to the situation of the intellectuals in the East European countries, that is, the situation of those who, having known in all its severity one of the essential forms of modern tyranny, now reject it either implicitly or explicitly, and yet are considered "reformists" and not "rebels," even when they radically reject the dominant ideology.

Petru Dumitriu, a Rumanian intellectual who fled to the West, discussed the "revisionist" movement of Eastern Europe in the August 1961 issue of *Preuves:* "As revisionism has revealed, the progressives of the East want to introduce into the functioning of the Socialist State conflicts of opinion and of open and legal interests, the unforeseen element of the will—in a word, human nature." Here one finds expressed in a way that could not be simpler and clearer the vital contradiction (that is, living and not sterilely logical or, worse yet, "dialectical") in which those struggle whom Dumitriu calls "the progressives of the East."

From one point of view, since it is a matter of "introducing [some changes] in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

functioning of the Socialist State" and not of "confronting it globally," the revisionists do appear as reformists. But from another point of view, to say that the changes concern the introduction "of conflicts of opinion and of open and legal interests" implies the rejection of the centralizing and authoritative State to which until now the socialist ideal was reduced in practice in the countries of the East, and to which it is still reduced in the theory and programs of many countries of the West.

If in the last analysis what is at issue here is to introduce into the functioning of the so-called Socialist State not only "the unforeseen element of the will," but purely and simply "human nature," then the vital contradiction we have alluded to appears in all its virulence. For this means first of all the recognition that this State excludes nothing less than "human nature" as such, and that logically and necessarily it is not in the end a question of reform but of radical change. This change will not call itself "revolution" only because the word is now equivocal and implies two facts that contradict the goal it sets for itself. The first fact is the organized and centrally directed violence aimed at taking power on the part of a minority either well-prepared or already installed in important centers of the governmental apparatus. The second is the simplistic notion, shown to be false by harsh experience, that such an accomplished fact can in itself bring about a radical change for the better.

One can therefore conclude that, when Polish, Czech, and Russian intellectuals demand freedom of expression and democratic legality and at the same time proclaim themselves socialists but without putting the regime as such in question, they are either performing a realistic act of mental reservation dictated by the intention of challenging the regime on the basis of a principle which the regime itself lays claim to, or—since yielding to their demands cannot occur without shaking the regime to its foundations—they will succeed in obtaining no more than some rather minimal concessions accompanied each time by a more or less severe intensification of political or police control. Here is the contradiction and, with it, the relative weakness of the position of these intellectuals. On the other hand, not to recognize how adamant is the set of circumstances with which they have clashed and continue to clash would be foolish, not to say ungenerous. The fact is that they are involved in a real political struggle, accompanied by a real challenge of received ideas. And it is also a fact that, to these truly "engaged" intellectuals, the revolutionism of their colleagues in the West merely seems not quite serious.

For their part, the intellectuals in the West either overlook, or in fact don't even see, what a great fact the resurgence of the demand for freedom is in a situation where it should in theory not be needed any longer, inasmuch as it has been supplanted by "concrete freedom." But at the same time these intellectuals want to overthrow the so-called capitalist (or neo-capitalist) system, or (as in the case of the progressives and the disciples of absolute efficiency and technical advance) ask for the introduction of social mechanisms maneuvered from on high and calculated by the experts. In both cases, one can repeat on their account the Biblical dictum: "They have eyes to see and do not see, ears to hear and do not hear." And one might add, brains to understand and do not understand.

The evil from which Western civilization obviously suffers is not the plethora of consumption (which in any event is the consequence of a certain way of understanding life and the aims of life, not a prime cause), but rather the lack of freedom due to the advanced regimentation and mechanization of collective existence. In this respect, whether the economy remains, generally speaking, "capitalist" is a secondary matter. And it is exactly on this point—the necessarily authoritarian mechanization of collective existence—that East and West meet in the selfsame

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crisis and could meet in the same movement of reform and liberation. The division between capitalist countries and noncapitalist countries has in fact today little or no meaning: the true question is to be found elsewhere. What the term "capitalist" means nowadays is not at all clear: what is clear is that it no longer means what it meant for Marx; and it is also clear that it indicates countries in which plutocracy, technocratic state control, and democracy coexist in a somewhat confused manner. To say this does not at all mean that we live in a substantially just, ordered, and free society. The opposite is true and evident: our society, presumed to be democratic, is eroded by injustices, evils, and very serious disorders, besides being besieged by tyrannies all the more burdensome since they are less apparent and, what is worse, accepted as inevitable (if not indeed desirable) by the majority of people.

As regards not only the democratic regimes but also modern society in general, one should never forget Tocqueville's lesson, according to which the establishment of the equalitarian principle in America meant that in the future attempts to set up an authoritarian regime would also be obliged to appeal to the principle of equality; and this simply because by now there was no other principle that could have validity. Applying Tocqueville's idea to contemporary industrial society, Raymond Aron writes: "All democratic societies are hypocritical, and they cannot help but be. These days it is only in the name of democracy that an authoritarian regime can be established, inasmuch as all modern governments are based on the equalitarian principle. Thus one can only establish absolute power by claiming to free man."

Everyone can see what a broad margin of ambiguity such a fact leaves not only to phraseology but also to political action today, and how naive it is therefore (not to call it something worse) to think that one is saying something striking when one appeals to democracy, social justice, or even freedom. Yet everyone can also see how necessary it is, in such a state of affairs, to keep a firm hold, when confronted by whatever regime is being praised or proposed, on the principle of freedom and without qualification. So one can gloss both Tocqueville and Aron by observing that the contemporary equalitarian regime, even if taken in its purely ideal form, necessarily entails a serious degree of the uncontrollable exercise of authority. Being obliged to serve the collectivity as a whole and to balance forces, tensions, and conflicting needs, this regime must necessarily base itself on a complex system of authoritarian measures that guarantee the functioning of both production and political power. It suffices to think on the one hand of the very high level of technique attained by industry —which is now inseparable from science— and on the other of the equally high level of technicality that the fundamental problems of politics, internal as well as external, assume today, in order to realize the constraints put upon the freedom of individuals and groups. It is enough to think of this to begin at least to see how the political problem has changed since the time when, before World War I, the Russian Revolution, and what is now called the Second Industrial Revolution, it seemed to reduce itself to the problem of introducing justice into the system of freedom, or of reducing the system of freedom to that of economic equality.

If therefore it is true that the equalitarianism typical of modern industrial society necessarily entails a more or less serious degree of uncontrolled and uncontrollable authority, it is also obvious that authoritarian measures inevitably generate not only oppression and injustice but inequality. Now, whether one speaks the Marxist or the libertarian language, what else indeed is the source of inequality if not the prevalence of the authority of fact and force over the ordinary, in the long run irrepressible, needs of human nature?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Under these conditions, to ask that the "system" become efficient either through a state-planned economy, realized thanks to a rigorous centralization of political power, or (and the thing is different only in appearance) by way of that "revolutionary technology" which is already in operation and which is being invoked from many sides as the radical and more truly progressive remedy for the ills of contemporary society—to ask this is tantamount to asking that the present defective system be precipitated once and for all toward one or another form of tyrannical collectivism.

"IN HUMAN AFFAIRS," Petru Dumitriu remarks in the article already mentioned, "efficacy proceeds by different paths from those of technical efficiency." The observation seems judicious, and it would be worthwhile following it up with others of the same author on the theme of the technocratic futurism of both "capitalist" and "socialist" inspiration.

Dumitriu observes that the political idea characteristic of our time is that man must adapt himself to the second phase of the scientific, technological, industrial, and social revolution initiated by the Renaissance. To do this, tradition is of no help; on the contrary, it is necessary to break with tradition, using it as an instrument of technical science. And to apply technique efficiently means to treat society as a uniform material to be molded and an energy to be regulated. But at this point, the Utopian optimism of the capitalist or socialist technocrats is confronted with the fact that "the historical inertia of mental habits and behavior is infinitely greater than the inertia of material." That is, the technocrat finds himself confronted by human nature:

> There are certain ways of behaving [Dumitriu continues] which are found, to different degrees, in all human societies: these are, perhaps, what constitute that which we call *human nature* and which remains indefinable, but not for this reason less real. . . . The technical mentality tends to use direct, propulsive forces—in politics, the decree and, in the worst case, terror; and in the best case, the appeal to civic feeling. Utopia tends to overestimate these three means and to underestimate social inertia. . . . [But] the distinction between *classic profit* and *collective profit* will never be readily understood by the nonascetic individual (who cannot, by definition, form the majority . . .); collective profit will never succeed in stimulating the utmost individual effort as, on the contrary, *selfish* personal profit does. . . . There are only two motives by which men can be compelled to work: personal profit or police terror, and even police terror must be compensated for by a modest tariff of economic stimulus. [Yet, Dumitriu concludes,] it is not by the drive for efficiency nor by way of the intention of serving the collectivity that one will succeed in reducing administrative inertia, but only by means of such counterforces as criticism and the free play of opposing interests. . . . The technocrat takes up his stand at the point of view of the State: this viewpoint is acceptable to the theoretician, not to the lone individual. But lone individuals are the majority.

Lone individuals are the majority; the majority represents human nature with its inertia. But precisely here, one could object, lies the heart of the problem. Confronted by the mechanical complexity of contemporary society, the appeal to human nature is not persuasive: it seems weak, precisely because in the last analysis this is an appeal to the social acedia of the lone individual, whereas what is at stake is the effective and, if possible, just functioning of the collectivity. And it is at the point of view of the effective functioning of the collectivity that, together with the technocrat and the politician, the intellectual in general today takes his stand, interested as he is in the coherence of systems (or, as some say, in the possibility of "totalizing," that is, of excogitating total theoretical solutions), rather than the viewpoint of the lone individual, who on one hand seems to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him incongruous and intractable, on the other reducible to specific and calculable physical, psychic, and sociological "structures."

Things being as they are in contemporary society, it would seem that there is no reply to such an objection. But there *is* a reply, and it is that one must choose: *this* is what is at stake and not calculations of the probabilities of efficiency or utility. It is necessary to choose the mode of life one wants, the society one prefers, the significance one gives to being in the world. Then, and only then, the individual appears as an ultimate basis for thought and an insurmountable obstacle to authoritarian manipulations. For the paradox of the associated life lies exactly in the fact that, while the majority of people seem to be indifferent to freedom and are content to be supplied with grub and prefabricated entertainments, the individual in the group—that is, the ensemble of individuals, that same majority which, seen from a certain perspective, seems passive—always opposes his own inertia to whatever "system" one wishes to impose on him, disconcerts it, indeed prevents it from being a "system," and as a result in fact denies and confutes it. This is the aspect freedom assumes when matters are observed from the point of view of the ensemble of individuals.

Yet there remains the "mass," that is, the collectivity taken and reduced to the smallest possible common denominator of material as well as moral exigencies. Here too one must choose. To put it accurately, the mass is indeed the very symbol of social inertia (and at the same time of instability), but it is also an eminently artificial entity, a statistic, a pure agglomeration, not a gathering of individuals. It is certainly possible, and this is what rulers and political experts do everywhere, to treat human society as a massive aggregation of interchangeable units. But it is also possible—in fact inevitable—to see society as a gathering of individuals. To obtain a collectivity, one must have a group of rules and norms that permit each individual to have both rights and duties, and to know who and what they are. To have a community, one must have "equal laws"; but even before equal laws, there must be an immediately "natural" solidarity, not explicitly formulated in a body of beliefs and norms, and the coherence of the community should be confirmed by each person's mode of being, and each person should contribute toward making it exist and bring something new and better to it every day.

For the mass, however, the only things that count are subsistence, a quiet life, and the possibility of escaping from the tedium of everyday servitude: the idiocy of private life on one hand, the orgasmic excitement of public frenzies or violences on the other. But, while the mass is an artificial entity artificially maintained, the existence of a minority which believes that there is in man a nucleus that can never be reduced to mechanical manipulation and brutalization is undeniably real. This is the part that wants to live, that resists and, when all is said and done, is the only part that counts.

Of course, throughout history, this is also the part that most often, indeed almost by its very nature, is destined to be defeated. But the regimes based on the masses, on power, on enforced cohesion, are also defeated and crushed. Only conformism always succeeds: the attitude of those who everywhere sniff out the wind of success and avoid at all costs and at every moment the danger of failure and misfortune.

In any event, those who simply have a horror of servitude, enslavement, and of the stupidity which accompanies enslavement, do exist. And one must not take it for granted that they are all, or even in their majority, privileged beings and persons who scorn the vulgar masses. In fact, just the opposite is true: they are a minority, the restless minority that prevents the social body from succumbing to the lethargy of the "dark ages." And, furthermore, the most serious insult that can be visited on the poor and oppressed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is to presume that they are only concerned with being given work, being fed, clothed, lodged, and entertained. This is precisely the insult that industrial man suffers at the hands of industrial society: at the hands of capitalism, if you prefer, but also with the concomitant idea that, in order to abolish the evils of capitalism, what is required is to put everyone to work, distribute to everyone the same ration of commodities decreed as necessary from on high by the technicians, economists, and sociologists, and, above all, decreed by those who possess political power; for in political power and the way in which it is exercised lies the crux of the problem. Instead, as one well knows, socialists consider political power simply a consequence of economic power. Therefore it becomes incomprehensible to them that a state not based on economic privilege, profit, and the private ownership of the means of production can prove in practice more tyrannical and exploitative than a capitalist state.

THIS SOCIALIST MISUNDERSTANDING is a particular part of a more general matter that has been set forth with great simplicity by Leo Strauss, an American philosopher of German origin. In his book *On Tyranny* (which, in the French edition published by Gallimard in 1954, includes, besides a detailed exegesis of Xenophon's dialogue *Hiero*, a very enlightening discussion with Alexander Kojève, the Left-wing Hegelian philosopher) Leo Strauss demonstrates how impossible it is today to think about politics unless one goes back beyond Machiavellianism and opportunist historicism to the premises of classical thought and the recognition that what characterizes modern tyranny is the fact that "when we were faced by it, we did not recognize it."*

This means that we moderns, and especially we modern intellectuals, set face-to-face with the fact of the implacable and absolutely authoritarian exercise of power, have taken this (which by tradition we should have regarded as the worst of regimes) for a new and progressive form of government, or at least an historically necessary phase, and therefore in substance good, of the evolution of our society. This holds true not only for Bolshevism but also for Fascism and Nazism as well as the tyrannical aspects of capitalist or democratic governments.

How could this have come about? In brief, Strauss's answer is that this has come about because the situation of culture and contemporary society is such that intellectuals have become the accomplices of tyranny on three counts: first, because modern tyranny is based necessarily on ideology and science; second, because as a consequence the regime naturally seduces the intellectuals, who see the realization (or the possibility of realization) of their ideas, and especially that total palingenesis of society which in the modern era for the first time has seemed desirable and attainable; and, third, because modern tyranny by its nature needs the collaboration of intellectuals, whether they be literati, scientists, or professional philosophers.

According to Leo Strauss, the difference between modern and ancient tyranny lies in the fact that the modern is dominated, first of all, by the idea of the conquest of nature on the part of man (collectively organized) thanks to science, and, second, by the vulgarization of scientific and philosophical knowledge, which produces a new and, one should add, completely unexpected kind of dogmatism and conformism, since it is based on the idea of a continuous criticism of reality and on empirical knowledge, not on any sort of revealed truth. This dogmatism and conformism receive formidable support in the idea of science as a universal language and a superior

* The author has translated all quotes from *On Tyranny* from the French edition; the translator, in turn, translated Chiaromonte's quotes from the Italian trying, however, to keep it in line with the original English phrasing. *On Tyrrany,* by Leo Strauss, was originally published in English in 1963 by the Free Press; it has been reissued, in paper, by Cornell University Press in 1968.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

manifestation of objective truth. And since science gives itself the aim of the conquest of nature and the efficient regulation of human society, it must be diffused and vulgarized—that is, it imposes itself with authority, though without assuming an explicitly dogmatic form, but rather the guise of empirical certainty. And this is not only true of the natural sciences but also of the so-called human sciences.

It is worthwhile at this point, interrupting for a moment the paraphrase of Strauss's thought, to ask by what path not only the intellectual but also the common man has come to accept such a point of view, indeed, to be precise, such an explanation of the world. The path seems to be simply the seduction exerted on the individual by a mode of thought whose postulate is that the individual himself as such can now consider himself freed from all teleology or superior intellectual order, equipped with an autonomous awareness not subject to any other authority but that of the solicitations and decisions of his own nature. And this naturally puts the aforesaid free and autonomous individual directly at the mercy of the mechanisms capable of influencing his solicitations and decisions: the "hidden persuaders." By which one does not mean merely the techniques of advertising, since every appeal to the individual as such, to egocentric impulses and "received ideas" (of which he deludes himself into thinking he is the author, because it is *he* who has received them) is destined to persuade him only too easily. "Received ideas" in this context are also and above all the ideas of social progress, humanitarianism, revolution, the total transformation of the human world with the help of technology and the radical abandonment of all ties with tradition.

It is therefore also in the name of freedom that the individual can today be made into a slave, and in fact he is. What is involved here is a particular conception of freedom, which Tommaso Campanella defined as "the reduction of every man to a natural freedom," defined by him also as the reduction of society to a strict order, which also reflected nature since it reflected wisdom and a perfect knowledge of human nature. This was the ideal which (besides Campanella) animated that fervor of thought which made its appearance around the 16th century and which we call "naturalism."

Today we can still say that we share this ideal. In fact it still seems to us that, in Rousseau's phrase, "man, born free, lies everywhere in chains." Today, however, the chains appear to be forged by the illusion of being able to attain "natural freedom" on the one hand through the release of the individual from all norms, and, on the other, through his subjection to a collective discipline which, it is supposed, will guarantee to each person at every moment the maximum of "natural freedom" (that is, of the satisfaction of his instincts and immediate desires) compatible with the concrete situation. This "natural freedom," together with the artificial servitude which is its corollary, signifies also a lack of awareness, a disregard of and obliviousness to that natural and inexorable servitude of man to that which in himself and in his very nature he does not know, will never know, and will never be able to dominate and rule. And it is from this very lack of awareness of, and obliviousness to, his dependence on an arcane order that the slavery of modern man springs: "Accessible everywhere, nature is everywhere unfathomable," Thomas H. Huxley said.

TO RETURN to Leo Strauss and his distinction between ancient and modern tyranny, and above all between the ancient and modern ways of considering tyranny; Strauss continues his discussion by observing that classical political science was based on an idea of perfection, that is, of "how men *could* live." This is a Utopia in the original sense, a reality that does not exist in any place, save that of the mind. For the ancients, this

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Utopia was at the same time "realizable" and "improbable": realizable insofar as it did not entail any change in human nature but only the attainment of a certain perfection and harmony; improbable insofar as its realization depended on "the most favorable conditions." As an extreme example, in Plato's case, "the favorable conditions" are themselves conceived of as absolutely "ideal"—"That which exists solely in our discussions," says Glaucon at the end of the ninth book of *The Republic*. Yet, contrary to what the pragmatic historian affirms, this does not take away any validity from the conception that animates Utopia, that is, from the ideal of perfection it proposes and explains.

Against every Utopia, except that of his own opportunistic realism, Machiavelli—Strauss continues—maintains that the question of "how one should live" has no meaning, and what counts is solely the real, ordinary, everyday behavior of men; while, on the other hand, the "conditions"—favorable or unfavorable—can be corrected and dominated by the "virtue" of the prince. At the same time, Machiavelli takes for granted a certain average, unchangeable human nature (*l'homo naturalis* or *homme moyen sensuel*) and offers to political ambition the model of a realistic, opportunistic, unscrupulous "virtue" employed with the aim of achieving the only political goal that had meaning for him —a state that was as great and as strong as possible.

Substantially, this is still the basis of political science today. But the modern historian, Leo Strauss argues, is not necessarily a Machiavellian, even if many of the consequences of his thought are. He starts from the hypothesis that what matters is the fact—the event—and that thought comes afterwards, and it is the thought of the "historian," expert at grasping the true significance and true tendency of events, exactly in the sense that the nature of the atom has been recognized by Rutherford and the great physicists who followed him.

Therefore, Strauss says, today we find ourselves confronted by a tyranny which, thanks to science's conquest of nature (including human nature, which both contemporary psychology and sociology claim to be able to define) can become perpetual and universal, that is to say, can impose its *significance*—its mode of progressing—once and for all on the subjugated societies. Thus man's thought can become subordinated to the collectivity by basing itself on the idea that every thought is "historic," that is, relative and deprived of its own truth, true only in respect to a specific and changing situation.

That being the situation, the intellectual who would want to teach the modern tyrants what they do not know—namely, the "laws" of history and society—must asume the attitude of a man hardened by the negative exaltation of stripping himself of any sort of "ideal" view so as to see only either the factual reality or the "opportunity." Furthermore, in the modern tyranny the difference between good and bad is supplanted by "historical necessity." This means that both the prince and his advisers regard themselves as intellectually in possession of history itself. So the road to absolute opportunism is wide open.

> One performs miracles [Strauss observes at this point] with the use of syntheses. Kojève's or Hegel's synthesis of classical and Biblical morality effects the miracle of producing an amazingly lax morality out of two moralities, both of which made very strict demands on self-restraint. . . . Both doctrines [Hobbes's and Hegel's] construct human society by starting from the untrue assumption that man as man is thinkable as a being that lacks the awareness of sacred restraints or as a being that is guided by nothing but a desire for recognition.

Turning from the moderns to the ancients, Strauss observes that the Greeks rejected as contrary to nature precisely the two ideas which seem to be the fundamentals of mod-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ern political thought—that is, the conquest of nature thanks to science as well as (and perhaps even more) the other idea, which asserts that scientific and philosophical knowledge can be diffused and vulgarized.

> According to the Greeks [Strauss notes], the diffusion of true knowledge among the unwise would be of no help, as knowledge that was acquired by the wise inevitably would be diffused and weakened, and transformed into opinion, prejudice, or mere belief. . . . The utmost in the direction of universality that one could expect is, then, an absolute rule of unwise men who would control about half of the globe, the other half being ruled by other unwise men.

Yet what is called not without contempt "Utopia" only makes explicit what is implied in every attempt at social improvement. Every opinion that affirms that one thing is better than another:

a) implies that there exists an idea of good and not that there is but one idea of it;

b) is *free*, that is, does not correspond to a factual material necessity but only to an aspiration of the spirit;

c) issues in a Utopia, that is, we repeat, in a reality that exists only in the mind;

d) is by definition "impossible," that is, incompatible with the present situation and the received and current ideas as to good and evil, just and unjust;

e) essential conclusion: the proponent of Utopia, whether he be a philosopher, an intellectual, or a simple conscious protester, has no ambition to rule or to become one of the prince's advisers, but only to persuade those who share his condition and his dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs. The goal he sets himself is not the enforced realization of some sort of global plan, but rather the most honest possible personal conduct and the most intelligent reform of the present state of affairs. As for the ideal, he will support it as one can only support ideals—by nourishing them with just thoughts (and so also criticizing them) and with actions in accord with such thought.

"The classics . . ." Leo Strauss concludes, "did not dream of a fulfillment of History and hence of an ultimate meaning of History." Evoked today, this simple thought takes on a singularly liberating significance. If we accept the suggestion, it will liberate us from the tyrannical moralism which would want each individual to be a slave of the inhuman obligation of justifying his own thoughts and actions before a nonexistent yet terroristic tribunal of a generic Humanity, raised to the position of an implacable judge over everything and everyone: namely, History, a much more jealous God than the God of the Old Testament; and much more petty too, since in practice it is incarnated in rulers and their intellectual advisers and extollers.

PERHAPS AT THIS POINT one might say that modern tyranny—the apparently irresistible tendency of contemporary society toward autocratic yet impersonal forms of organization—derives, even more profoundly than it does from chance social, economic, and political causes, from the fact that modern man cannot conceive of anything absolute outside the political absolute, and therefore of no other duty superior to that of political action, and no other ultimate means of resolving action outside of technically organized violence. In other words, modern man believes that political action can be legitimately substituted for that which in the past was the religious need of an absolute. Whether what is involved is "building socialism" or disposing of an ever-growing variety of material goods, the difference can be as great as one wishes in detail, but it is not crucial, since in every case the goal is considered an ultimate goal, beyond which there is nothing, and therefore the goal is not limited by anything.

In the last analysis, politics is conceived at one and the same time as the terrain on which a new vision of life is nourished and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the instrument to realize the new civilization that this vision implies. To which one is prompted to ask: how can a political belief satisfy the yearning for an absolute which accompanies and torments man? And, furthermore, does there ever exist a moment in which one "realizes" a new civilization?

Now, if one does not start from the totalitarian presupposition, according to which politics is action *on* men to forcibly transform their relations in line with a specific ideological program, it seems difficult to admit that a political belief—founded as it is by its nature on the relative, on chance, and perhaps even on the "virtue" of one or more individuals—can satisfy a need that concerns the intimate relations between man and the world; of such a relation, the political exigency can only be the expression and consequence. It seems equally difficult to admit that a new civilization can be born from political action and, more generally, that the birth of a civilization can have a date.

In truth, the cycle of political regimes described and discussed by Socrates in the eighth book of *The Republic* remains until today the image that best expresses and explains both the relationship between politics and human nature and the necessity that regulates political changes. Besides indicating in the most simple way how from the corruption of one regime another is born through germs which already existed in the preceding one, Plato in fact shows through Socrates' mouth how, in the end, the sucession of political regimes depends on an ungovernable demonic element, that very element which constitutes the depths of the human spirit. Here, Plato gives us to understand, lies the true root of historical necessity: in the depths of the human spirit and, for that very reason, in the ultimate nature of things. From the depths of the human spirit to the ultimate and highest law which is the essence of the divine, there reigns a single inscrutable rhythm.

From this descends the duty of the free and thinking man to concern himself with the common good and to speak out about the events in his community; and also the duty, even more serious, to abandon the field of political struggle and to withdraw with the few to save what can be saved when one sees that "there's nothing to be done," that necessity must follow its course without anyone being able to oppose it, indeed every effort to oppose it can only accelerate its fulfillment. Perhaps we have reached this point today. In any event, despite the many signs, one would have to be very wise to affirm this with certainty.

To conclude this discussion of modern tyranny and the part intellectuals play in it, one might ask what in the end is the principle of authoritarianism, and in what specific form it appears nowadays.

The simplest reply seems to be that the authoritarian principle is inherent in the very fact of placing oneself, as regards social and political problems, at the point of view of the ensemble, the totality, of the necessary and mechanical congruence of the parts and the efficient functioning of the whole. In fact, the preoccupation with the totality implies the idea that human society is an organism whose laws are essentially known and, by implying that, it also implies the idea that one can, indeed one must, modify it from on high by means of more or less violent external interventions.

Now it is obvious that, if one starts from this point of view, one will never arrive at the autonomous individual, the free, self-assured man who is the support, not the part, as a gear wheel or organ, of any community that wants to be both civil and orderly. By this path one will arrive instead at the factory, the barracks, the electronic bureaucracy, plus the police to maintain external order. But perhaps not even at this, for, after all, this is only an abstract hypothesis and, just to give an example, a factory requires more flexible rules, seeing that there one aims at real utility and efficiency, not the absolute

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

guarantee that "not a leaf can stir unless the leaders want it to," and that everything is always regulated in the same fashion.

If, after having defined so summarily the principle of modern authoritarianism, we must mention what meaning freedom can have today, we would first of all make an observation that does not directly concern political freedom yet is no less essential. The observation is this: man is free not because freedom is the essential of his thought and consciousness, but rather because he can neither demonstrate that he is necessitated by nature, history or divine will, nor that he is liberated from natural necessities and the conditions and constraints of society: *causa sui,* creator of himself, *faber fortunae suae.* Thus he remains *uncertain* on both counts. Which means that in each of his choices he will know that he is in some way determined, but not by what and in what sense. In other words, despite everything, his choice will be a free and new act, an addition to the world and a modification of the actual state of affairs: something that not even he, the subject of the action, can foresee.

This freedom, which goes hand in hand with the equally unknown yet incontestable nature of things, cannot be alienated but only humiliated. As for the more strictly political freedom, the freedom of the individual, first of all, is a trap and a deception if the society in which man lives is not free; that is, if there does not exist for everyone a free space in which each person can give proof of his value, or simply manifest his true nature. The existence of such a space certainly does not depend only on the laws, nor even on that which the ancient Athenians called, with a word that remains hard to translate, *isonomia.* Long before it is enforced by the laws, freedom is guaranteed by the feeling that in a given society there has been formed that tie between the individual and the world and that consciousness of human destiny, that is, the dignity characteristic of man, which is the most profound and indestructible of facts—against which no tyranny can prevail, and not even the artifice of the intellect. And this is the fact which, more than any other, the intellectuals of the West seem to have forgotten.

Translated by RAYMOND ROSENTHAL

APORTES
Revista trimestral de ciencias sociales
publicada por el ILARI
Director: Luis Mercier Vega
NUMERO 12

PARAGUAY DESDE ADENTRO

Algunas consideraciones sobre la estructura socioeconómica	Daniel Fretes Ventre
El Paraguay y la integración económica	Emilio Fadlala
Universidad y estudiantes en una sociedad tradicional	Domingo M. Rivarola
Aspectos estructurales de la educación	Guillermo Heisecke
La geopolítica y el Ejército brasileño	Oliveiros S. Ferreira
Las Fuerzas Armadas guatemaltecas en la política	Jerry L. Weaver

Inventario de los estudios en ciencias sociales
sobre América latina

Redacción y Administración:

Instituto Latinoamericano de Relaciones Internacionales
23, rue de la Pépinière
PARIS — 8e

Suscripción anual: 20 f. o 4 dólares

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Henry Pachter

Teaching Negro History

LIKE OTHER MINORITIES, black Americans have a history of their own—peculiar sufferings and peculiar experiences, as well as special forms of resistance or of protective evasion. But this history is distinguished from the history of all other minorities in that no member of the race has been able to escape it. Baptism does not wash off the color of the skin or the memory of slavery, integration even at its best does not eradicate the experience of the ghetto. This feeling of history as a prison from which there is no escape has been enshrined in many admirable testimonies—autobiographies, novels, and above all, in Negro music and poetry. But despite the great effort of W. E. B. Du Bois, we still need a history of the Negro in America which is more than a record of facts. Blacks have nothing to compare with Louis Adamic's *Plymouth Rock and Ellis Island* or with Oscar Handlin's *The Uprooted.* There are scholarly studies of certain aspects such as the slave economy, there are social studies and psychological studies but nothing that gives the American Negro a past to look back to with pride and anger, a history that identifies him and describes his place in this society.

What some well-meaning people mean by "black history," however, is not the critical, painful history which now is gaining ground in the college departments. Rather, one gains the impression that they would like to teach in the Negro colleges and in the ghetto schools something that would simply be the obverse of the patriotic gore that still dominates the elementary and high schools. The avowed purpose of such instruction is to give people of all races and classes a feeling of belonging together. It gives the citizens an identification with a nation; it exalts the hallowed tradition which blots out the identity of the individual and substitutes for it a collective identity. The dissenter who does not wish to be absorbed into that collective monster, or who cannot participate in that national celebration, can withdraw from this community by joining another which either encompasses a group smaller than the nation or transcends it: a political philosophy, a party or movement, a church or other sect may provide him with a spiritual home.

The nearest thing to a nation, however, is an ethnic group or inherited religion. They seem to be "natural" identifications in contrast to the artificial or imposed unity of a national culture. To confirm their identity, such groups must establish historical roots (one reason why the student movement in this country keeps collapsing is that no generation knows about its predecessors). The black militants feel the same need and, not surprisingly, their idea of Afro-American history is an exact replica—a projection or reflection—of the national American celebration: instead of patriotic gore, antipatriotic gore; instead of the false heroism that one finds in all histories of young nations, the false heroics of the oppressed races and the tearful recital of their suffering.

All this may be necessary and unavoidable to give black people some pride. I wish it were not necessary—historical parallels show the dangers of romanticizing, of self-glorification and self-commiseration, of patting-one's-own-back. We might cite the examples of either young nations or labor his-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tory. In both cases we find that the apologetic or official historians overstress both the original oppression and the glory of liberation, with the result that almost nothing can be learned about the true nature of the fight and of the relationships between dominant and submerged class.

Not that I deny either the suffering or the heroism; nor do I ignore the need to correct certain untrue, prettified, and deceitful accounts of slave-holding paternalism. By all means, let "black history" set the record straight! But let it not put one false image in the place of another; let there not be a different kind of half-truth or legend, let there be truthfulness. As Professor Genovese remarked, it is all too easy to be carried away by our passionate commitment to the cause; but to see the other side of the picture is not a matter of "abstract justice or a desire to be fair to the enemy. It involves political judgment. If we blind ourselves to everything noble and . . . virtuous in the ruling class, how do we account for its hegemony? People cannot long be held down by force alone."

Slavery, to be sure, was no idyll, and part of the slave economy was capitalistic rather than paternalistic. Nevertheless, if we wish to understand the durability of that system over long periods of history, we must study the multiple bonds of cultural, psychological, social, and even physical comradeship (think of Faulkner) between the dominant and the submerged castes. Denounce them we may, but we cannot ignore their society-building aspects either. These other aspects, in fact, contribute to and explain the psychological plight of the Negro down to this day—they explain why James Baldwin cannot "get the whites off my back." If insipid glorification of self leads to fatalism, a doctrinaire refusal to recognize the self's place within the system results in self-deception or in infantile dreams: Brecht's Jenny the Pirate Bride, the prototype of all lumpenproletarian dreamers, has no future—her hope is that the ship will come to take her away.

"BLACK HISTORY" can be *studied* independently; but fully to understand it, we must see it as part of American history. Black people are neither entirely passive in the stream of that history, nor are they isolated from it or connected with it merely through resistance. Black history is deeply enmeshed with the history of the country; it is a country which black people (however much against their will) will have helped build and to whose resources they have an equal claim. Even their resistance movements have at various times contributed to the shaping of American character. Nat Turner, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, Rosa Parks, Duke Ellington, and—to end the list arbitrarily—Martin Luther King belong in American history by force of the contribution they made to Negro history in the United States.

These names would figure monumentally also in a special history of the American people or in one of the blacks of the world. Moreover, they might individually figure in other histories: one in a history of slavery, another in a history of education, a third in a history of jazz, etc. By the same token, Crispus Attucks belongs in a history of the Boston massacre and the color of his skin may be mentioned proudly in Fourth-of-July speeches, but he has a very small claim to be incorporated into Negro history; a sociologist trying to find out what makes revolutions may be more interested in the fact that he was—so they say—a ruffian and might today, again, be a victim of police brutality. Likewise, the fact that Arizona was "discovered"—meaning that a non-red man set foot on its soil once for the first time—by a Negro named Estavanico, is hardly worth mentioning except in a history of Arizona. On the other hand, the social historian might be interested in Jean-Baptiste Pointe de Sable's trading post which later received the name

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chicago; but de Sable did not make "Negro history," and many of the others whom proud militants now ask us to admire did not make history *qua* Negroes.

To sharpen the point, I shall refer to another race. Marx, Freud, Einstein, Bergson, Proust, Hoffmannsthal, and other Jews, baptized Jews and half-Jews have exercised enormous influence on the mind of the 20th century, a fact which might interest the psychologist. But none of them belongs in Jewish history or can be called a Jewish thinker, in the way Martin Buber is a distinctly Jewish thinker. In another context, no history of music needs to mention that Mendelssohn, Mahler, Schoenberg were Jews; but no such history could omit the Negro and the Caribbean influence in modern music and dance any more than the Slavonic elements in Dvorák and Smetana.

Jazz music has a black soul but the contributions of black inventors, black engineers, black discoverers, black actors, or black scientists do not constitute *Negro* history. As the black community becomes more confident of its own worth, the need to stress the number of blacks who did the same things as whites will disappear. Maturity and real equality will be evident when Negroes—like Jews, like Italians, like women, too!—no longer look around self-consciously, counting themselves and checking whether they are present in the right proportion. History must record when the *first* Negro entered the Supreme Court (there is still no woman there) or becomes vice-president of one of the 100 biggest corporations. But gradually this interest will become truly historical, a thing of the past like feminism, and it will be a happy day when we shall need as few chairs for the teaching of Negro history as we do now for the teaching of feminism, of the labor movement, or of Catholicism in the United States.

I have suggested that we must distinguish between (a) contributions which Negroes have made *as individuals,* regardless of their racial or other affiliations; (b) those which the Negroes have made either as an ethnic subculture or within that culture; and (c) the history of Negro movements as part of American history. The latter, I think, should be taught not in ghetto schools but in every school; the former may be subjects of specialized academic studies, with category (b) probably eliciting a somewhat greater interest at colleges that have a predominantly minority population—but then again, we hope that such colleges will in time be on the way out. I need not insist that today interest is distributed just the opposite way: Negro movements are studied either in graduate schools or apart from the context of American history, but elementary and high school teachers in the ghettos stress the irrelevant themes of individual Negro contributions and of the ghetto subculture.

There are also the "free universities." The danger here is the same we encountered in the Jefferson School and other Proletkult ventures, or in the works of Herbert Aptheker: all labor history appears as one long preparation for The Day. The pious distortions of such history breed illusions which lead to bad political decisions. The revolution appears as one big parade—and if that fantasy does not materialize, the students will either drop out of the movement or resort to acts of desperation which discredit it.

The history of the civil-rights movement and the history of the black minority overlap, but they are not identical. There are pages of glory and pages of sadness and shame in both. Both must be studied critically—not so much in order to "learn" from the mistakes of the past, but perhaps to understand how mistakes came to be made and what tortuous ways history sometimes will take to achieve its ends.

We understand the temptation to say: "My ancestors were no bums either." But what matters is how the wretched came to be respected. Therefore history must not glorify or gloss over the ugly sides of the past. It must be truthful or even painful.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

UNIVERSITY PLACE BOOK SHOP
69 UNIVERSITY PLACE
NEW YORK CITY

africa afroamerica caribbean

CESAIRE, Aime. Letter to Maurice Thorez. 15 pp., paper 2.00

CESAIRE, Aime. Return to my native land. 141 pp., paper 4.00

DIOP, Cheikh Anta. The cultural unity of Negro Africa. 210 pp., paper 5.00

EDWARDS, Adolph. Marcus Garvey 1887-1940. 43 pp., paper 1.50

GARVEY, Amy Jacques. Black power in America. 40 pp., paper 1.50

GARVEY, Amy Jacques. Garvey and Garveyism. 287 pp., cloth 7.50

GARVEY, Marcus. Aims and objects of movement for solution of Negro problem. . . . 11 pp., paper 1.25

HARRIS, Wilson. Tradition, the writer and society. 75 pp., paper 2.00

HUBERICH, Charles H. The political and legislative history of Liberia. 2 vols. 1735 pp., cloth 35.00

JAMES, C. L. R. The case for West-Indian self-government. 32 pp., paper 1.25

JAMES, C. L. R. Mariners, renegades and castaways. 215 pp., paper 2.50

JAMES, C. L. R. Wilson Harris—a philosophical approach. 15 pp., paper 1.50

JOHNSON, Samuel. The history of the Yorubas. 737 pp., cloth 15.00

KENYATTA, Jomo. My people of Kikuyu. 59 pp., paper 1.50

NKRUMAH, Kwame. The spectre of black power. 15 pp., paper 1.00

RIGAUD, Milo. La tradition voudoo et le voudoo Haitien. 433 pp., paper 12.50

SARTRE, Jean-Paul. Black Orpheus. 65 pp., paper 2.50

SENGHOR, Leopold Sedar. The mission of the poet. 10 pp., paper 1.25

TOOMER, Jean. Cane. 250 pp., cloth 6.00

WILLIAMS, Eric. Education in the British West Indies. 186 pp., cloth 6.00
paper 3.75

IF NEGRO MILITANTS expect to be elevated by Negro history, they may come in for some surprises. History delivers no proof that black is beautiful; it debunks heroes of all colors. It has done it to George Washington and to Patrick Henry. That famous "great empire of Ghana," which is casting its spell on current "black history," was a worse mess than the great empire of Ethiopia today. If Negroes need legends they should turn neither to good novels nor to good history writing. But do they need myths rather than the truth? Is white brainwashing to be replaced by black brainwashing? It was depressing to see recently on TV how black children are being subjected to the Pavlovian treatment of repeating "I am black I am beautiful. Black is beautiful." The Sunday *New York Times* recently allowed beautiful Barbara Ann Teer to assert that Negroes are more graceful than other people and that "integration (in the theater) is merely a subterfuge for white domination." Mis Teer may be more graceful than the guilt-ridden editor of the White Liberal Establishment paper; but to say that "black men [in the mass media] are either white black men or shuffling Uncle Toms" certainly is no help to the Negroes who wish to break out of the ghetto.

Every minority in the U.S. with the single exception of the Indians has looked at the sweatshops and segregated quarters as a station to be passed—perhaps we should say "overcome." They no longer think of themselves as "invisible men" but have emerged into the mainstream. If Negroes wish to go the same way, they may have to overcome greater handicaps and greater prejudices. Yet, they should not rush to the conclusion that it is impossible and that they must be condemned to stay forever in their subculture. Negro history does not show that it is impossible, nor does the history of other minorities indicate that people have to abandon their ethnic ties in order to succeed in the dominant culture. It is true that the famous "melting pot" about which one learns in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

school seems to cook rather slowly. To change the metaphor, America remains a jigsaw puzzle, especially at election time, in matters relating to the kitchen, in drinking habits and marriage rites, but above all in patronage—the mutual promotion of kin (a valid concern of "black power"). Hence Negroes, like others, must decide for themselves at which point they wish to leave the protection of their ethnic subculture; and again, that decision may be made individually rather than collectively.

Minorities always fear "losing" members. Nevertheless, if one were to write the history of Italo-Americans, it would be largely one of losing "identity," with Antonini becoming Anthony, as Krotsziner became Kay. Most nationalities also have thrown off the immigrant image. Social studies have shown that second-generation Americans tend to be ashamed of their parents and to have a high incidence of criminality; but the third generation is again proud of its origins. Maybe the time schedule has been elongated for Negroes; there are some who still need to repudiate the "Negro" image (which partly accounts for their wish to be called "blacks"). James Baldwin has rightfully insisted that it is not the Negro's image of himself but the white man's image of the Negro that he must get off his back. Alas, that cannot be done by a mere act of will, and it cannot be done by pushing Bigger Thomas out of sight. Images, even mistaken images, have a way of becoming legends, and spiritual realities have a way of becoming oppressive. The myth of the Negro keeps the black man captive, and it is understandable that he should look for a countermyth to justify his existence as a rebel.

All oppressed classes are told that they are "beautiful" or closer to nature and that their apocalypse will precede a general renovation of mankind. They dream of the Day of Abolition as the beginning of an eternal Sunday. But history may have a lesson which I hold is more beautiful as well as more moral: that salvation is an ever-continuing effort, not the return to some state of nature before the Fall. Young Marx had such fanciful notions of the proletarians, as Rousseau had of the *noble sauvage*. I don't know whether Adam was black, but I don't believe with Herbert Marcuse that after so many thousands of years of history we could simply conjure up the lost, primitive-but-good creature whom God had conceived at the beginning of the creation. The entire notion is unhistorical. Neither the black nor any other apocalypse can save us from civilization and history.

Postscript

AT THE RECENT CONVENTION of the American Historical Association, African history was somewhat underrepresented. But the history of American Negroes not only had its fair share of academic panels; it also was the topic of two major events in the Grand Ballroom of the Statler-Hilton in New York. The first honored W. E. B. Du Bois on the 100th anniversary of his birth; the other was a joint session of the National Council for the Social Studies and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, chaired by the latter's Mr. Charles Wesley. Its subject was: "Teaching Black History in America—What Are the Problems?" At the least one of the problems, I discovered, is that Mr. Wesley and his Association are still entertaining conceptions about the uses of history that were discarded by the profession after Nietzsche's indictment of its abuses.

Mr. Wesley invited historians to study Ghana's kings who, he said, were as interesting and as powerful as the English kings whom we do study. I do not doubt that some of them were as powerful in their own spheres; but there is no link between their culture and today's Afro-Americans or the present state of Ghana, which is not coextensive with its namesake either geographically or ethnically. Mr. Wesley does not know that we don't teach history any longer,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

like Carlyle, as hero-worship, and therefore even the wisest among the African kings can interest only the specialists.

The effort to base black pride on archaeology would have results as disastrous as those Teutonic pageants Bismarck's novelist-historians prepared for German adolescents. Unfortunately, the proponents of "black history," in contradistinction to Negro history, are trying to misuse history in a similar way: for purposes of propaganda and power politics. Speakers at the Convention denied that Negro history in America is part of American history and, instead, they tried to see "black history" as part of "the Third-World struggle." Some quite consistently denied that a white person is capable of teaching Negro history—of all people historians resent such insinuations most; for it is their daily bread to know, describe, and comment on cultures remote in time and place.

But let a traditional college contritely submit to such insults and hire a black man to teach black history—in the nature of things that man would have to come from a "black" college, and as Professor Melvin Drimmond explained, such hiring-away is stark colonialism and racialism. Black colleges are being robbed and raped—so it seems—by the white man's integration effort. "Black history" as conceived by its proponents at that meeting seems to be intended as a means to impose apartheid on Negro students, not as a means to increase the understanding of Negro problems for both white and black students.

No amount of racial pride or of African studies can increase the wages of hospital workers, garbage collectors, shepherds, grape pickers, and sewing machine operators who happen to be black, Puerto Rican, or Mexican. The statisticians tell us that the incomes of minority families are rising more slowly than the incomes of WASP families, but the proponents of "black studies" refuse to analyze the figures. Since they have previously refused to learn the methods of the social sciences, they are content to show that their people are worse off than others. They disregard or are ignorant of the information which might point the way to improvement, namely that these are the incomes of needle workers, garbage collectors, and grape pickers. If these rise, minority groups will increase their standing and go on to better jobs.

Dr. King met his death when he tried to help the garbage collectors; he had read the figures correctly and he showed Negroes the way to gain higher status in society. Proponents of Afro-American culture studies actively prevent Negroes from learning the skills that are necessary to advance in our highly technological society and that might even be necessary to win a revolution or to organize a society after a revolution.

Let me be absolutely clear about this. I do not deny a Negro who is a physicist the right to be a black nationalist, if that is his desire; but I implore black nationalists not to prevent Negroes from becoming physicists. They are not helping either black individuals or the black people a whit. "Black studies" is no substitute for learning a skill; a doctorate in Afro-American studies should be reserved for scholars in this field, and it cannot be a substitute for individual skills and technological and professional training.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jervis Anderson

Styron and His Black Critics

ONE AFTERNOON last summer I happened to be watching a TV discussion among five or six black teenagers. All were speaking out of a deep pride in their blackness, as it is almost mandatory to do today, and also out of a feeling of being seriously at odds with the way life is in America. A few seconds before the program ran out, the moderator said he wanted to ask them one final question: did they love America? They looked at each other in silence, evidently as surprised by the question as by its timing. But the clock was running and the moderator waiting, so each of them, with different degrees of certainty, simply said, "No." I got the feeling they weren't committed to so total a renunciation, but that under the circumstances, "No" was the closest and briefest approximation to what they felt. With time on *my* hands, and remaining within the context of their negation, I tried to put into their mouths what I thought they might have said if the circumstances were more suitable to elaboration. I had them say: "It is hard to love America as it is. And there doesn't seem to be much reason to love it for the way it has been. But we feel there is something in what the country can still be that we love."

I didn't think that was too unfair or optimistic an interpretation. They had been critical of the experience America imposed upon them, but they certainly had not voiced any hopelessness over the kind of future they were demanding. Nor, if I thought of the majority of black Americans, could I have said anything different. Their struggle can scarcely have a larger meaning than that they are waiting for something in the spirit of the country to be resolved before they can give themselves fully to it or confess to any great love for it. There are many among them who insist that they are as American as anybody else, but even those do so less out of love than out of a refusal to surrender the moral and historical legitimacy of their citizenship.

This something they are waiting to see resolved, what can it be? My own view is that it is the tension between the black and white sense of American reality which is distilled in the spirit of the country and which, as the evidence so clearly suggests, is one of the legacies of slavery. It is this legacy which has been responsible for the duality of national psychology and life-styles as well as for the growth of sharp socioeconomic contradictions between black and white Americans. As such it is also the source of the crisis that has now developed in America not only around socioeconomic contradictions, but also around such related ones as black dignity, black identity, and black power.

To think of this cleavage and of its seedtime on the old plantation is to see that there have always been two Americas, one black and one white; and that, psychologically, each serves in its own way as the source of a mythic vision through which the children of the ante-bellum time in America tend to look out upon each other.

FOR REASONS such as these we cannot be too surprised at the almost opposite reactions of blacks and whites to William Styron's novel, *The Confessions of Nat Turner,* which is based on the life of a slave who led a bloody but short-lived uprising in Southhampton, Virginia, in 1831.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Turner has since gradually assumed the dimensions of a hero in the imagination of Negro Americans, his gesture—the outstanding one of its kind in American history—reminding them pridefully that as slaves they were not all docile accomplices in their own bondage. Reading *The Confessions* against such a background of feeling, and discerning in it a violation of their historical belief, their first reflex is to question the credentials and condemn the motives of a Virginia-born writer in whose regional history Turner stands more as villain than as hero. To the majority of white readers, who are not involved in the sentiments which the blacks hold of Turner, such a reflex has no place in the evaluation of literature which stands, in any case, as an end in itself.

These basic attitudes underlay critical responses to the book. The majority of white critics liked it, finding it superb both as fiction and as a re-creation of history. Only after most of the white judgments were in did the voice of the black critics begin to be heard. And, considering the hostile tone of the voice, one felt it was influenced as much by what the black critics themselves thought about the book as by their resentment that it had been so loudly applauded in the media of "the white literary establishment." In academic journals and in such black publications as *Freedomways, Negro Digest, Ebony,* and *Liberator,* the black critics subjected the book and its author to one of the most violent attacks in the recent history of American writing. The more notable of these castigations were later to be collected by John Henrik Clarke, an editor at *Freedomways,* and published, in 1968, in a volume titled *William Styron's Nat Turner: Ten Black Writers Respond.**

The collective judgments of the essayists were that the book was a perversion of history, a libel on the life of Turner, an apology for slavery, and a reflection of Styron's "vile" racist attitudes.

Some of the specific charges: that Styron deliberately distorted the known facts about Turner and slavery in order to pander to the stereotyped view of blacks held by whites; that Turner's thought and speech reflected white consciousness and white language; that salient facts concerning Turner's marriage to a slave woman and his early attachment to his parents and grandmother were suppressed; that Styron emasculated him by focusing his sexual and romantic desires upon a white girl rather than upon a black woman, as well as by investing him with homosexual and onanistic tendencies; that the benign aspects of slavery were emphasized in order to reduce the justification of Turner's rebellion; that Styron questioned Turner's courage as a slave leader by making him falter in the act of shedding white blood in behalf of freedom; that he portrayed Turner as a man who despised his fellow slaves and expressed toward them the kind of disgust felt only by white Southerners; that though Turner was also a slave preacher, Styron minimized his religious and social contact with the slaves; that he attempted to "steal the meaning" of Turner's life; and that only an excess of arrogance could have led him to suppose that, as a white man, he could authentically re-create the thought processes of a black slave and conceive the novel from a center of black consciousness.

These criticisms, particularly those concerning the biographical and other physical details of Turner's fictional life, rest on the claim that they are in contradiction to clear historical evidence, a claim which seems to account for the book being approached more

* Boston: Beacon Press, 120 pp., $4.95. Contributors in addition to Clarke are: Loyle Hairston, a freelance writer; Dr. Charles Hamilton, chairman of the Department of Political Science at Roosevelt University; Lerone Bennett, historian and editor at *Ebony*; Dr. Vincent Harding, an assistant professor of history at Spellman College; Ernest Kaiser, staff member of the Schomburg Collection; John Oliver Killens, novelist and essayist; Dr. Alvin Poussaint, professor of psychiatry; John A. Williams, novelist and essayist; Michael Thelwell, writer and teacher at the University of Massachusetts.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as a work of historical scholarship than as a novel. I will not attempt any extensive appraisal of the historical data of *The Confessions*, and for good reasons. First, this article aims merely to be a general review of the controversy; second, factual accuracy is not, in my view, crucial to a judgment of the book; and, third, the debate concerning historical accuracy has already been amply aired, notably by Herbert Aptheker, arguing the negative in *The Nation*, and by Eugene Genovese, arguing the affirmative in *The New York Review of Books*. It will be necessary to touch upon some of these questions, but only as they have a bearing upon the problems of value, belief, consciousness, method, and moral concern, which the novel poses as historical fiction.

THE MOST STRIKING of the essays in *Ten Black Writers Respond* is the one by Michael Thelwell. While it agrees in substance with the major points raised by his colleagues, it is more skillful and cogent in analysis, more reflective in temper, more literary in approach, and more attractively written.

Particularly worth reading is his analysis of the problems of language and consciousness a writer is likely to encounter in undertaking to reproduce the speech, thought patterns, and attitudes of a slave, especially a slave rebel. The slaves, he points out, were forced to develop two languages in America, one for their masters and the other, a language of oppression, for themselves. The latter, he says,

> is a language of conspiracy and disguised meaning, of pointed irony and sharp metaphor. It is a language produced by oppression, but whose central impulse is survival and resistance. It is undoubtedly the language in which Turner's rebellion and the countless other plots for insurrection were formulated. Anyone who has been privileged to catch the performance of a good black preacher in the rural South (or Martin Luther King talking to a black audience) understands something of the range and flexibility of this language. Lacking complicated syntactical structure and vast vocabulary, it depends on what linguists call para-language, that is, gesture, physical expression, and modulation of cadences and intonation which serve to change the meaning—in incredibly subtle ways—of the same collection of words.

Since a faithful portrayal of Turner, Thelwell argues, "requires some literary approximation of this language," one of Styron's major failures lies in the fact that "Nat speaks, or rather meditates, in no language at all. His creator places in his mouth a sterile and leaden prose . . . a strange fusion of Latinate classicism, a kind of New England Episcopalian prissiness." It is so perceptive and instructive a point that to question the validity of its application to *The Confessions* appears almost like quibbling. But one must, for though it tells us a good deal about language it also ignores a good deal about fiction. While idiom is an accurate reflector of a particular cast of consciousness, it is by no means the only one, and, to the novelist, certainly not an indispensable device; he can still evoke reality without being tied to the actual flavors and colors of idiom. Any kind of language, imaginatively conceived and flexibly applied, is able to capture essential states of consciousness; and in *The Confessions* it is the essence of Turner's consciousness that counts most seriously, not those homespun styles and flavors of it imparted through idiom or dialect.

This is not to say the elaborately stylized language Styron employs comes anywhere close to reflecting the consciousness of a black slave rebel of 1831. If anything, it strains away from credibility rather than toward it. In this, Styron may well have been misled by some of the examples available to him in his acquaintanceship with black Americans. He has been quoted in *Newsweek* as saying:

> I think Jimmy [Baldwin] . . . broke down

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> the last shred of whatever final hangup of Southern prejudice I might have had which was trying to tell me that a Negro was never really intelligent. . . . Perhaps it was his [Jimmy's] diamond-bright intelligence which allowed me to say "When I plunge into Nat Turner . . . he will respond with as much intelligence as I can give him."

Well, Jimmy is scarcely the model of an 1831 black slave rebel on a Virginia plantation: he neither speaks nor, one should imagine, is any longer obliged to think like one. It would seem that Styron's determination to make Turner as intelligent as possible—evidently according to the way intelligence is perceived and admired in Negroes by white Americans—led him to portray Turner's consciousness through a rhetoric that bears a closer resemblance to the mannered periods of Henry James, than, say, to the blunt shafts of Malcolm X. All of which is to say that the fault of Styron's language lies less in its failure to capture accurately the externals of slave idiom than in its failure to reflect credibly the inner life of Turner's consciousness.

A point concerning the alleged factual distortions: Perhaps Styron's critics ought not to be judged too harshly for tending to read the book more as history than as fiction, for in certain respects they were encouraged, if not advised, to do so by the author himself. In a prefatory note, Styron claims to have "rarely departed from the *known* facts about Nat Turner and the revolt of which he was leader." Yet not very far into the book it is discovered that there has in fact been a departure, notably from the facts of Turner's parentage and childhood (which Turner had dictated to Thomas Gray in his original "Confessions," a 4000-word document that serves as the basis for Styron's novel).

The promise of accuracy was neither a wise nor a necessary one to make, not only because it was clearly hard to keep, but also because there was precious little historical fact to remain faithful to except the event of the rebellion itself. C. Vann Woodward tells us that the known facts were so skimpy that the author had as free a hand to create and invent as any novelist could have wished for. And Styron himself admits in the same prefatory note that "in those areas where there is little knowledge in regard to Nat . . . (and such knowledge is lacking most of the time), I have allowed myself the utmost freedom of imagination." But having thus given the impression that his book is both history and fiction, he then goes on to define it as "less a historical novel . . . than a meditation on history." So that by now he has succeeded in raising the most serious doubts in his readers' minds as to how they should read and understand his book: They have already found him somewhat less than faithful to his claims to historical accuracy, and now they feel pretty much on their own in what to accept as fact and what as invention. It would surely be reasonable for them to wonder, which a good many of them probably did, whether Styron was not attempting to lay claims to a troika of genres, perhaps hoping to write off his critical losses in one direction against his successes in another.

Well, what really *is* it? I think the book bears a closer resemblance to the historical novel than to any other genre with which we are familiar. In fact when—in a heated exchange with Aptheker in *The Nation*—Styron comes to invoke aesthetic authority, he leans on none other than Georg Lukacs, the eminent Marxist critic and one of the best living students of the historical novel. He cites Lukacs thus:

> What matters in the novel is fidelity in reproduction of the material foundations of the life of a given period, its manners and feelings and thoughts deriving from these. . . . But this never means being tied to particular historical facts. On the contrary, the novelist must be at liberty to treat these as he likes, if he is to reproduce the much more complex and ramifying totality with historical faithfulness.

Clearly, then the lack of accuracy in Styron's reproduction of historical detail is hard-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ly a legitimate ground on which to criticize the portrayal of Nat Turner. What is to be judged is the degree of Styron's faithfulness to the essential historical spirit of Turner and the event with which he is associated.

BUT SINCE ONE of the impressions gained from the black critics is that Styron, as a white man, labored under a fatal difficulty in his attempt to portray a black Turner, it might be useful to pause here and consider some of the implications of this controversy for black writers defining their own historical situation. On the basis of precedent alone—the excellent portrayal of Negro character by Faulkner and Gertrude Stein, to name only two—it seems rather absurd to suggest that white American novelists are incapable of perceiving and portraying black character. And it becomes even more absurd when one considers that no black American writer has ever been heard to speak of the impossibility or the impertinence of blacks portraying white character. To make such a claim, then, is almost to suggest that the imagination as the crucial instrument of artistic creation enjoys a free and vigorous life among black writers but is moribund and impotent among those who are white.

Actually, while that is what the claim of the black writers implies, it is much too absurd to stand for what they really mean. What they must really mean is that the imagination should be suborned into relating not what it sees but what is politically or sociologically expedient to be seen. And looked at in those terms, it becomes clear that a part of the critical animus against Styron resides in his critics' demand that literature should serve the immediate ideological interests of the black community—in the same way almost that the Communist critics of the thirties in America demanded that literature should consciously serve the aims and objectives of the class struggle. There is certainly nothing wrong or unprecedented in writers serving such ends if they so choose, but it is certainly wrong, if no longer unprecedented, for them to insist that no distinction remains between writing which supports the causes of agitation and writing which reflects an independent and individual moral outlook. It may well be the black critical intelligentsia who hold no respect for such a distinction to whom Genovese (in *NYRB*) is referring when he points out that their attack upon Styron reflects a requirement for "conformity, myth-making, and historical fabrication."

But the problem of tendentiousness aside, there exists a clear need for black writers to portray their own reality. While such a portrayal may not necessarily be better than one attempted by a writer outside their own group, it will certainly make less strenuous demands on their imagination, particularly since a sense of their reality and their past is immediately accessible through experience and group memory. Further, as historians of culture have pointed out, a group's collective vision of itself or of its past is not necessarily incorrect simply because it may not correspond to the estimate others make of it.

"We must," Thelwell writes, "insist on our prerogative to define this heritage in terms of our own choice. This is necessary not only to black needs of the moment, but to fill a vacuum in the total history, consciousness and sensibility of the nation." By and large, he is right. But, if only by implication, he raises a point which the black writers do not take sufficiently into account when they accuse Styron of distortion. That is, if Thelwell's statement is meant as an argument against Styron's intruding upon "our prerogative to define this heritage in terms of our own choice," it is ridiculous, for Styron could no more interfere with this "choice" than he could question or revoke the prerogative. So his argument is useful merely as a reminder to black writers that it is about time they undertook more fully the exercise of the prerogative of which he speaks.

Now 136 years have gone by between 1831, the year of Turner's death, and 1967,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the year Styron published his novel. Unless he was the only American writer inspired by the possibility of re-creating or resurrecting Nat Turner, we are all entitled to ask what were the black artists—especially those to whom, it now appears, Turner is a figure of such surpassing importance—doing all those years? Negroes, after all, have been publishing fiction in America for more than 100 years. So that while it is entirely understandable and even justifiable for black writers to be less than enthusiastic about Styron's portrait of Turner, they are, it would appear, also indebted to him for having reawakened them to the possibilities for powerful fiction which Turner's life contains, as well as to a militant sense of their prerogative to define their own historical reality. We may all hope that out of this reawakening will emerge a literary portrayal of Nat Turner that is infused with the blacks' sense of their own past and which, as a result, offers some necessary corrections and modifications to Styron's effort. It is such a creative, and at the same time corrective, activity that Ellison has in mind when he states that

> Negro writers and those of the other minorities have their own task of contributing to the total image of the American by depicting the experience of their own groups. . . . A people must define itself, and minorities have the responsibility of having their ideals and image recognized as part of the composite image which is that of the still forming American people.

But to speak of Ellison—a man as committed to the experience of his own people as he is to his vocation as an artist—is to be reminded that the prerogative of black writers to define the humanity and reality of their own group is not all. What Ellison demands in the effort of many white novelists who have attempted to portray Negro reality he would no doubt also demand in the work of the blacks. "Seldom," he says, remarking upon the image of the Negro in American literature, "is [the Negro] drawn as that sensitively focused process of opposites, of good and evil, of instinct and intellect, of passion and spirituality, which great literary art has projected as the image of man." Which is to imply that the prerogative entails more than the black writers' desire to present their own people with monumental or inspiring images of their own character.

The still forming and emerging reality of black Americans consists in more than suffering, grievance, spontaneity, and soul. It consists also of moral strength fashioned out of one of the darkest histories any group has known, of weaknesses and errors of outlook that mark the history of any people, and personal follies that connect them with the history of man. The prerogative of defining their reality entails, therefore, an obligation to perceive and acknowledge the complexities of their experience, the courage to see the negative as well as the positive aspects of their historical reality, and a willingness to endure the self-denying rigors of portraying so demanding a composite. A people, in the long run, do not care to be made a gift of their "beauty" so much as they care to see it defined and accounted for. And on the basis of what is to be observed in life and art, self-definition proceeds against the most arduous of tests: what is edifying in the character of an individual or a people inspires attention only as it shapes itself out of the complex of stresses and contradictions to which experience or the imagination subjects it.

BUT TO RETURN to *The Confessions*. To see the book as historical fiction is to be obliged to concede it the privileges of vision and invention to which it is entitled, while insisting that these freedoms be exercised within the essential historical terms of the subject with which it deals. Lukacs, in *The Historical Novel*, reaffirms these principles:

> The portrayal of "world-historical individuals" from the standpoint of their success or failure in their historical mission frees them

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> of all the trivial anecdotic characteristics of biographical portrayal without making them forfeit any of their human aliveness. . . . He [the world-historical individual] must not be placed on a pedestal in order to appear as a great figure, for the events themselves will raise him in imposing upon him their task.

Lukacs then goes on to speak of Walter Scott's approach to the historical novel:

> Scott discovers the only possible means whereby the historical novel can reflect historical reality adequately, without either monumentally romanticizing the important figures of history or dragging them down to the level of private psychological trivia. Thus Scott humanizes his historical heroes while avoiding what Hegel calls the psychology of the valet, namely the detailed analysis of small human peculiarities which have nothing to do with the historical mission of the person concerned.

What seems chiefly in question then is whether the details of Turner's life and character, as Styron fashions them, contribute to Turner's aliveness as an individual, without sacrificing his historical reality as a slave rebel, without reducing or suppressing the nature of his historical mission, or without dragging him down to the "level of private psychological trivia." *The mere fact of Styron's having exercised his rights of invention does not automatically exonerate him from judgments having to do with the way he treats history—least of all a history such as slavery with which black and white Americans have anything but a harmonious connection and in which they tend to find quite different memories of themselves.*

The latter point is of special importance, for we cannot pretend that Turner does not stand on the side of the blacks in their historic confrontation with whites, and that therefore he is not a more immediate part of the black reality. Nor, that being true, can we deny that the meaning of his mission is now an inextricable part of the meaning of their life in America, and that they have a greater stake in preserving what history bequeaths of that meaning than does any other group.

To digress here for a moment, let us relate the foregoing to one of the prevailing contradictions in American life. While social cant declares the society and its history to be pluralist in content and in spirit, the general style of the society and much of its written history suggest differently. Nonwhite minorities may be recognized as socioeconomic realities, but they have no relationship to American privilege and power except as it is a relationship which defines who it is in fact that enjoys privilege and wields power. And what that relationship says about privilege and power it also says about cultural and historical legitimacy. So a history they are asked to accept as their own, and out of which they are told to develop an image of their reality, is a history written and interpreted and validated by others, a history viewed through the perspective of a group which traditionally considers the country, its values and its past to be essentially white. Some of the current struggles in our schools, particularly those around history textbooks, are the fruits of that contradiction. And so too is the sense of violation which most black readers feel over Styron's portrayal—and the white majority acclamation—of Nat Turner's reality.

I do not share in the acrimony of the attack made against Styron. I see neither value nor wisdom in branding him a racist simply because his vision of Turner does not correspond to what one perceives oneself in history: It is hard enough for the artist to live with the uncertain truths of his own vision, to live in dread of the acid day when his readers tell him he has *failed,* let alone to be told when it is all over that he has been discovered in the deliberate service of racism and oppression. And I do not question his right to invent detail except his invention of the white Miss Whitehead as the chief—in fact, only—object of Turner's libido, since such a thing is not at all necessary to the por-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trayal of Turner's historical mission as a slave rebel. Nor do I insist upon a portrayal of Turner serviceable to the immediate ideological needs of the black community. But I am sympathetic with the feeling most black readers have that their sense of their own past has been violated and that so too has the sociopolitical meaning history ascribes not only to Turner's rebellion but also to all the other slave rebellions here in America, as well as in places like Haiti, Jamaica, Brazil, and other islands in the West Indies. And this violation, one should add, does not lie in the invention or "distortion" of details so much as in the effect which the emphasis of such inventions has on shaping Turner's character and suppressing his sociopolitical reality in history.

If Lukacs is right, then the thematic essence of a particular historical figure should be reproduced in any work of art that attempts to deal with such a figure. And to note this is to take note of one of the crucial restraints upon the imagination of the historical novelist: It is not really free, since its freedom to re-create is confined within the terms of a given historical circumstance. It may turn out, of course, that the vision a writer has of a particular figure cannot be realized within the limits of the meaning history gives to such a figure; in which case, the best way of liberating himself from such constraints is not for the writer to violate the reality of a figure who already exists, but to invent his own hero in history.

Styron might well have chosen the latter course, for the essence of Turner that emerges from *The Confessions* is not that of a rebel against slavery, but a man caught in the torments of a religious dilemma, and in whom rebellion is nourished not as a consequence of his sociopolitical experience but as a consequence rather of his religious fanaticism and his repressed sexual lust for the slaveholder's women. In short, Turner in the novel is a man driven by the bloody and vengeful apocalypse of the Old Testament yet also held by the appeal to love and charity contained in the New. It is this religious mania that seems responsible for his sexual continence and frustration; it is a combination of the mania and the frustration that seem to account for his impulse to rebellion; it is a conflict between Old and New Testament commands that leads him to falter over his only act of killing; and it is also this conflict that seems responsible for the sense of ambivalence and even regret with which he assesses his role in the rebellion. The rebellion seems to have interested Styron therefore not for the possibilities it contained for the writing of a reflective historical political novel, which is what the nature and events of Turner's life would seem to require, but merely as an occasion for making Turner the center of a religious passion play. *All of this not only underplays the social condition of enslavement but also tends to make the politics of rebellion somewhat irrelevant.*

It could be argued, of course, that the tone of Turner's original "Confessions" as dictated to Thomas Gray would naturally lead a modern observer to find in him a strong disposition to religious fanaticism. But it is quite possible that the reductions and rationalizations started even then, for Turner had little control over how his words were put down by Gray—a Southern gentleman who felt no admiration for Turner's deeds—or how his thoughts would be colored, interpreted, and extended by Gray's own judgments. For, as Styron himself has since observed, Turner's "Confessions" were "taken down in a backwoods jail by a white man whose own reliability as an amanuensis must be questioned."

And if Turner, a slave preacher, was as religiously fanatic as Styron makes him, then one way of dramatizing this fanaticism would certainly be to portray Turner in some close ministerial relationship with his fellow slaves and the effect his ministry had upon them. This was not done, and there can be no more excuse for failing to do this than for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

making a fanatic out of him. Turner's reality as a slave preacher and rebel must, in any case, be judged against what history tells us of the Negro church. Franklin Frazier, in his excellent study of that institution, reminds us that the Negro church served as the first seat of political agitation among the slaves, a function it continues to serve in our own time. It was therefore possible for a slave preacher to plot rebellion among the slaves without being the religious fanatic Styron makes him out to be. Nor was it necessary for him to have been so singularly articulate and intelligent, for here, as Frazier quotes, is an ex-slave's version of what the slave preacher was:

> Our preachers were usually plantation folks just like the rest of us. Some man who had a little education and had been taught something about the Bible would be our preacher. The colored folks had their code of religion, not nearly so complicated as the white man's religion, but more closely observed. . . . When we had our meetings of this kind we held them in our own way and were not interfered with by white folks.

It is for some of these reasons that it is hard to imagine Turner after his capture virtually collapsing in remorse and, in anticipation of one of the sophisticated theological notions of the mid-20th century, finding that God is dead. As he says in the novel, "maybe he [Thomas Gray] is right . . . maybe all was for nothing, maybe worse than nothing, and all I've done was evil in the sight of God. Maybe . . . God is dead and gone, which is why I can no longer reach Him."

These may represent interesting speculations on the problems of religious faith and commitment, but they can have little to do with the historical reality of a man who revolted against one of the most inhuman institutions in Christendom, no doubt in full awareness of the odds against his success. Which is also to suggest, finally, that Turner was not all that necessary to what we can observe of Styron's purpose. In fact, *The Confessions* might well have been a far more persuasive fictional statement if Turner had been Styron's own man rather than an authentic man of history, if the chief character had been Styron's own invention—one of God's millions of anonymous children in Southern history.

One might even go so far as to agree with Richard Gilman who, in an essay in *The New Republic,* questions whether Styron needed to use a black figure at all:

> for this purpose the protagonist did not have to be a Negro, and his being one introduces all sorts of distractions and irrelevancies into the book. . . . The misleading dilemmas, misleading because they aren't the dilemmas that being a Negro or a slave might conceivably pose, but dilemmas proper to a certain kind of religious fanaticism; the misleading psychology, misleading because again, Styron hasn't made a reading of Negro or slave mentality but only of a religious fanatic who happens to be a Negro; the misleading tensions, misleading because they are never pertinent to the principal narrative and never embodied in relevant actions—all this exhibits the fatal internal contradictions that bring *Nat Turner* to its knees as fiction.

ALL OF THIS leads, and not improperly, to certain judgments on the quality of Styron's artistic vision and its relevance to, or effect on, the psychohistorical state of American society, particularly in regard to racial disharmony. This is said with full awareness of the dangers in trying to relate literature to social needs, for it can quite easily be taken as a request that literature subordinate itself to sociopolitical demands. Yet it is also true that serious literature cannot earn the attention it continues to demand if it disowns an interest in the passions and problems of the times for and in which it is written. Serious artists have always associated this demand with the success or failure of their purpose. Van Gogh, for instance, speaks of the world as one of God's sketches gone bad and interprets the artist's duty as that of "recon-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

structing this sketch and giving it the style it lacks." Camus speaks of the artist's role in aiding the completion of the unfinished business of the world. And Lukacs himself points out that "the principal front of struggle in the artistic sphere . . . is the conquest of harmful legacies."

If one regards the continued denial of their historical "truths" which minority groups suffer in American life and literature as a national "sketch gone bad," as "unfinished" historical business, or as a "harmful legacy," then one cannot be satisfied with the efforts of artists which have the effect of leaving the sketch "bad," the business "unfinished," or the legacy "harmful." One of the most serious judgments on *The Confessions* is that dealing as it does within the premises of a harmful legacy, it has contributed little to a positive revaluation of that legacy, let alone to a conquest of it. There is nothing in it that invites white Americans to revise some of their historic prejudices and correct some of their surviving stereotypes concerning the character and outlook of black Americans or the nature of their response to slavery. In spite of the book's elaborate conception and inspired religious ratiocinations, one can scarcely imagine a more comforting and even entertaining reinforcement of the conventional white American outlook upon blacks. Nor is there much, if anything, in it which answers to the Negroes' sense of whatever dignity they were able to eke out of a terrible history—a history across which blacks and whites will have to reach with a handclasp before blacks can begin to confess to any love for this country.

These are not illegitimate observations to raise around the concerns of art, for not the least of its qualities that have won it such prestige in our culture is its capacity to witness the need for moral change. If *The Confessions* fail to witness such a need it has nothing to do with Styron's "racism," as some of the angrier black critics charge, but with the fact that his personal vision seems to have been insufficient to the enormous demands of his subject.

WAR/PEACE REPORT

An independent monthly magazine presenting fact and opinion on progress toward a world of peace with justice.

"War/Peace Report is one of the most perceptive and responsible periodicals devoted to matters of war and peace."—U THANT

The only American magazine devoted solely to the peace question, **War/Peace Report** presents up-to-date coverage of world crisis areas such as Vietnam and the Middle East and in-depth analyses of the long-term problems of achieving peace. Experts of various nations and outlooks express their views in the pages of **War/Peace Report** on such issues as disarmament, the development of world rule of law, the U.N. and U.S. foreign policy. On many of these questions, **War/Peace Report** has presented direct dialogues between spokesmen of the East and West. **War/Peace Report** regularly reviews the latest books on war/peace issues and offers a monthly round-up of the activities of the peace movement.

In recent issues: George W. Ball discusses "Making World Corporations into World Citizens" . . . Richard A. Falk reports on his recent visit to North Vietnam in "A Vietnam Settlement: The View from Hanoi" . . . four experts on military and foreign policy, Donald G. Brennan, Robert Strausz-Hupe, Jerome Wiesner and Adam Yarmolinsky participate in "The Great Nuclear Debate: Parity vs. Superiority." Other authors have included Senator George McGovern, Hans Morgenthau, Louis B. Sohn, Norman Cousins, Wilfred Burchett, Herman Kahn and many others.

WAR/PEACE REPORT, Dept. DIS., 218 E. 18th St., New York, N.Y. 10003

I am enclosing a check or International Money Order for $5.00 (U.S. student rate $3.50)

Name ..... Address .....

City ..... State (or country) ..... Zip .....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ralph M. Goldman

Confrontation at S.F. State

THE OPEN SOCIETY—insofar as it actually is open and fulfills its claims—is a standing invitation to trouble. Its liberties, tolerance, and constraints upon powerful minorities invite attack, license, and violence by the aggrieved, short-tempered, and politically unskilled. Its ideological commitment to compromise and law invite tests of its physical strength and its willingness to assume risks. The open society is likely to be misused as much as it is used; in many circumstances, it operates as an imperfect mechanism—not equally or immediately open to all its members. If the open society has a chronic disability, however, it is its difficulty in recognizing and adjusting quickly to the new technologies of its assailants.

"Confrontationism" is such a new technology. It has been equipped by the great mechanical revolution in modern communications. Senator Joe McCarthy gave confrontationism its first major test run in America. It worked so well that those incomparable technologists, the United States Army, finally stole the patent rights at the Army-McCarthy hearings.

Today, confrontationism is being practiced on the nation's campuses, where the open society is most open and often most vulnerable. A case study in contemporary confrontationism, in particularly complex form, may be drawn from events at San Francisco State College—where a Hyde Park-type speaker's platform, the first on any American campus, sits in mid-campus; where there are more radicals and hippies per classroom than at most other colleges; where the faculty senate was the first in the nation to seat student representatives as voting members, and where the concept of a student-run experimental college within the regular college had its birth. More than most American colleges (and in many ways more than the rest of the society of which it is inescapably a part), San Francisco State has been a proudly open campus. There is consequently a special poignancy in hearing the pickets shout: "Shut it down!"

The Technology of Confrontationism

CONFRONTATIONISM is a strategy with a distinctive set of technological attributes: *Instant Majoritarianism, Instant Equality, and Instant Replay.*

• *Instant Majoritarianism* requires the presence of an adamant minority that suddenly wishes to be perceived as the majority. This minority often has the appearance and the idiom of revolutionary idealism, but seldom the sustained anger and patience of the classic revolutionaries. Instant Majoritarianism seems to be a byproduct of our patent-medicine culture, wherein small pills are sold as quick cures for large illnesses.

• *Instant Equality* elevates minorities in another way. The compression chamber for Instant Equality is the television screen and the newspaper headline, neither of which has room for more than two parties to any fight. Thus each party, by definition, is half the story, half the conflict, and equally as important as the other. The economics of screen space and newspaper paragraphs is such that third, fourth, and other parties are necessarily shunted off-stage. In this way, confrontationism simplifies conflict into "good guys" *vs.* "bad guys," and, regardless of complexities, compels the audience into dichotomous choices. A pitched battle with the cops is always productive of Instant Equality.

• The third attribute of confrontationism is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Instant Replay. A well-timed confrontation, usually at midday when sunlight is good, is assured a place on all evening television newscasts as well as in the breakfast editions of local newspapers. Instant Replay provides the prompt publicity necessary to confrontationism. Instant Replay also fixes the picture of "what happened" as though it all happened at the place of greatest movement, controversy, or violence. Action is an essential ingredient of good TV camera work, even if the cameraman has to provoke the action. Instant Replay reports "the action" before further information can arrive to provide a context for the action. This technological attribute challenges the tactical ingenuity of the cops, the Establishment, and competing minorities, each eager to transmit its own "action." Above all, Instant Replay pushes back the thin line between appearances and reality, further confounding the Silent Majority that watches the tube at home or glances at newspapers over breakfast.

San Francisco State, one of the largest of the 18 operating colleges in the California State College System, serves more than 18,500 students. The College has a faculty of 900 regular (i.e., voting) and 550 part-time (i.e., nonvoting) members—a faculty body of 1,450 in all. The operating budget of the College, appropriated by the California legislature, is roughly $20 million a year. The faculty, by attracting sponsored educational and research projects, has added between $5 million and $6 million to this thin budgetary soup.

Nearly 60 academic departments offer a full array of bachelor's and master's degrees, teaching credentials, and other certificates. One department—Special Education—offers a doctorate jointly with the University of California; several departments, with international reputations, have some faculty more qualified than their counterparts at the University for doctoral instruction. These 60 departments of the College are distributed among 6 schools, headed by deans whose administrative and clerical staffs are laughably tiny.

Yet, San Francisco State is one of the leading urban colleges in the nation, despite the shadows cast over it by Berkeley and Stanford. Distinguished faculty are attracted to it by life in the San Francisco Bay Area and by a student culture that is, according to David Riesman, among the half-dozen or so most distinctive in the country. Very little else could attract or hold such faculty, for the teaching load is still an anachronistic 12 hours (nearly double the load of comparable institutions), the salary scale runs between B and C according to ratings by the AAUP (American Association of University Professors), and research support, sabbaticals, stenographic help, administrative services, and other normal tools of academia are almost nonexistent. The proportion of doctorate degrees among the newly hired faculty has dropped sharply in recent years, leading to a disproportionate number of part-time faculty (whose role in faculty affairs is a hidden dimension in the current crisis).

The 18 campuses of the California State College System serve over 200,000 students with a corps of more than 8,000 full-time faculty. This is the largest system of public higher education in the Western Hemisphere, established under a "Master Plan for Higher Education" by the Donahoe Act of 1960. Under this Plan the University (now with nine campuses around the state) was to specialize, as it always had, in professional training and "the research function." The colleges, many of them still state normal schools, were grouped together under a new board of trustees to function primarily as "teaching institutions." The two-year junior colleges—now numbering more than 80—constitute a third component of higher education. A principal architect of the Plan was Glenn S. Dumke, then president of San Francisco State College (1957–61) and now chancellor of the entire California State College System.

Most students at San Francisco State—

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sometimes referred to as the Silent Majority —are older, married, parents, career-oriented, and employed at a full- or part-time job. All but 800 of them live off campus and fit their studies into a tight daily schedule. This Busy Majority tends to be liberal in outlook, too preoccupied to become campus activists, and unable financially to afford loss of course credits or school time. The current agony of most of this Busy Majority—black, white, and brown—is indeed something to behold, if only those who report the news would behold it.

The reader is asked to remember these descriptive details, for nearly all are grist for the confrontation mill.

The "Pre-History" of the Crisis

RON MOSCOWITZ, a long-time educational reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, wrote on December 2: "How does a prestigious college like San Francisco State get in the almost helpless mess that the campus finds itself . . . ?" For some answers, he suggests, "one must go all the way back to the late 1950's, when the Master Plan . . . was adopted." Under that Plan, the University bested the colleges in caliber of students to be admitted, dollar support per student, faculty salaries, experienced administrators, budget and curriculum flexibility, to mention but a few of the discriminatory arrangements.

In the eight years since Dumke left campus to become Chancellor of the California State College System, San Francisco State College has had five presidents and a heavy turnover of administrators. In September 1966, the College welcomed a new president, John H. Summerskill, former Vice-President for Student Affairs at Cornell. His credentials seemed excellent: youthful, liberal, sensitive to the aspirations of minority students, and willing to spend hours on end in discussions with the student leadership.

Problems came upon Summerskill from the very beginning. His inaugural ceremonies on May 2, 1967, were enlivened by an unprecedented "picket-in" by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS); the "demand" had to do with the issuance of student class rankings to draft boards. Two other confrontations developed later: one grew out of the invasion of the campus newspaper office, on November 6, by a group of Black Student Union (BSU) members—among them Black Panther leader George A. Murray—during which the paper's editor was assaulted, property was damaged; another resulted from the publication of alleged obscenities in one of the campus papers, *Open Process*. On December 6, 1967, BSU and MAPS (Movement Against Political Suspensions, an *ad hoc* student group) conducted a well-televised demonstration to protest suspensions. This demonstration led to rioting, including an attempt to burn down the college book store. President Summerskill adopted tactics designed to avoid a police-student confrontation. Since the campus is state property, city police may come onto it only on the invitation of the state official in charge, in this case, Summerskill. Summerskill did *not* call in the police, who were nonetheless on standby along neighboring streets. He simply closed the campus for the day. Property damage was light, and the militants were denied their confrontation.

The faculty and San Francisco community leaders promptly applauded Summerskill's restraint. The 21 Trustees of the State College System, several of whom were appointees of Governor Ronald Reagan, thought otherwise. In a *televised* meeting of the board, the Trustees submitted Summerskill to a humiliating interrogation. Faculty representatives at the meeting were similarly treated. On February 22, 1968, Summerskill tendered his resignation, effective in September.

Meanwhile, Summerskill had been working with a committee of deans to design a program of Black Studies. He also invited various student groups to prepare innovative curriculum proposals, which he subse-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quently transmitted as a grant solicitation to the Carnegie Foundation. On February 9, 1968, he appointed Dr. Nathan Hare, a sociologist formerly at Howard University, to help design a Black Studies curriculum. By April 16, Hare submitted a formal proposal for a Department of Black Studies to be established by September, 1968.[1] As these activities went on, Summerskill also took steps to recruit additional Negro faculty and administrators.

During the year another student group had come to the fore: the Third World Liberation Front, a loose coalition of black-, brown-, and red-skinned radicals. Third-World leadership tends to be predominantly Mexican-American or Latin-American; one of its faculty sponsors has been Dr. Juan Martinez, a temporary instructor in history. On May 21, 1968, TWLF, BSU, and SDS staged a demonstration demanding the retention of Martinez (whose one-year appointment was terminating), the inauguration of a Black Studies program, the special admission of 400 minority students with less-than-admission-standard school records, and the termination of the College's contract with the Air Force ROTC.

The demonstration quickly became a violent confrontation. Personal assault and property damage were incurred more systematically than in December. President Summerskill called in the San Francisco police. Television cameras rolled as militants and police pushed each other on a parking lot next to the Administration building. In the midst of the ensuing marathon negotiations between militants and administrators, Summerskill departed for Ethiopia on a long-arranged consulting mission for the Ford Foundation. Chancellor Dumke issued a public notice of his dismissal almost immediately thereafter.

The faculty's presidential recruitment committee, weary of looking for leadership from off-campus, proposed five names, the usual number to be nominated, to the Chancellor and Trustees. All were on-campus faculty; only one—Robert R. Smith—had a distinguished administrative record as former Dean of the College's outstanding School of Education. In February, 1964, Smith had created a statewide furor with a letter of resignation that blasted Chancellor Dumke and the 21 Trustees for failure to seek adequate fiscal and popular support for their sector of the state's higher education. He was then widely supported by faculty at San Francisco State and other campuses. Thus, the faculty recruiting committee gave the Trustees little choice but to appoint Smith for president.

The summer months were hectic. Work on the Black Studies curriculum was pressed forward, and in September President Smith created a Department of Black Studies, with Hare as Acting Chairman. The Trustees were given the College's formal proposal for a B.A. degree in Black Studies. Applications for special admission students were processed. Martinez was retained in an administrative post. New black administrators were recruited, including Dr. Joseph White as Dean of Undergraduate Studies, who was made responsible for administrative supervision of the new Department of Black Studies. In his initial address to the faculty, President Smith outlined elaborate plans for experiment and change. He looked forward to a good academic year. He did not reckon with the confrontationists.

The Chronicle of Confrontations

FALL AT SAN FRANCISCO STATE turned out to be a continuing TV special. Only a skeleton of events will be reviewed here. How things *appeared* on campus often had more to do with struggles in arenas distant from the College.

[1] A critique of Hare's proposal on educational, political, and other grounds was made by John H. Bunzel, chairman of the College's Department of Political Science, in *The Public Interest* (Fall, 1968). Bunzel has since been the target of numerous harassments, including an unexploded bomb outside his office, tire slashings, phone calls, etc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

George Murray, the Black Panther Minister of Education, was also a part-time graduate student and part-time instructor at the College. He was to teach English as a "second language" to a class made up mainly of ghetto students. Another prominent Black Panther, Eldridge Cleaver, it should be noted, was scheduled to teach Social Analysis 139X across the Bay at Berkeley. On the California ballot at this same time were such nominees for President as Richard Nixon, Hubert Humphrey, George Wallace, and, for the Peace and Freedom Party, Eldridge Cleaver. Running for United States Senator were an outspoken liberal Democrat, Alan Cranston, and an outspoken conservative Republican, California Superintendent of Public Instruction Max Rafferty. Like Governor Reagan, Rafferty made much of campus unrest. In this setting, on September 26, six weeks before Election Day, the Trustees "suggested" to President Smith that he "reassign" Murray to nonteaching duties. Smith, with remarkable understatement, observed that Trustees' intervention in a faculty personnel matter without explicit charges was "most unusual." He declined to comply.

On October 9, Presidential candidate Cleaver spoke from the college's speaker's platform, treating the crowd to a generous flow of four-letter expletives. In the roster of names mentioned for condemnation or praise he never referred to his fellow-Panther, George Murray.

On October 18 two bomb-like contraptions were found on campus: one at the Admissions office, and the other at the door of the Political Science Chairman. The special admission program had fallen somewhat short of the authorized 400 students, and the Political Science Chairman, as noted earlier, had been critical of Hare's approach to Black Studies.

On October 24, the Board of Trustees met in regular session at Fresno State College. Nearby, Murray delivered a speech to assembled students about killing the "white oppressors." At the Trustees' meeting, San Francisco State officials were presenting the case for a Black Studies Department, which was then authorized.

On October 28, Murray, back in San Francisco, called for a strike of black and brown students on November 6, the day *after* Election Day. He urged striking students to carry guns onto campus, but it was not clear when or for what purpose. Later, Murray explained that it was "to protect themselves from the racist administrators." The next day Mayor Alioto asked his district attorney to look into "such exhortations to violence" to determine if a clear-and-present danger of violence existed or if a felony had or was about to be committed. On Halloween Eve, Chancellor Dumke; citing Section 43522 of Title V of the California Administrative Code, directed President Smith to "suspend George Murray temporarily as a member of the faculty and as a student" on grounds of misconduct. Smith's response, in a public statement, was in part as follows: "The action of the Chancellor is unprecedented. He acted contrary to strong representations by community leaders . . . and against recommendations my staff and I made. We have an investigation in progress and necessary action would have been taken at the appropriate time."

Smith called for a confrontation of his own, inviting the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, the Chancellor, and their General Counsel to meet with him the next day, November 1, in San Francisco. They never showed up. Meanwhile, Smith notified Murray of his suspension. On November 4 the Black Student Union leadership, in the company of Dr. Hare and Dean White, held a press conference to issue Ten Demands and the formal strike call.

The Ten Demands, in brief, called for: (1) immediate transfer of all Black Studies courses into the Black Studies Department, with full pay for their instructors; (2) a full professorship for Dr. Hare; (3) creation of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an autonomous Black Studies Department; (4) filling of all unused admissions in the special admissions program; (5) admission of all black applicants into the College, regardless of number; (6) 20 teaching positions for the Black Studies Department; (7) dismissal of the Student Financial Aid officer, to be replaced by a black person; (8) no disciplinary action against the strikers; (9) prohibition of Trustee dissolution of any Black Studies programs on or off campus; (10) reinstatement of George Murray.

These demands, said the BSU leaders, were not negotiable and indeed correct. Some were already in effect (e.g., Black Studies Department); others required breaches of faculty due process (e.g., automatic promotion for Hare and dismissal of the Financial Aids officer without charges); others were impossible to implement (e.g., not allowing the Trustees to dissolve Black Studies programs).

On November 6 the BSU strike began with a noon rally attended by an estimated 2,000 students. As the rally proceeded, student squads went into regularly scheduled classes to ask students to join them; some asked the instructor for permission. As reports of a typewriter thrown out of a window, several small fires, and disrupted classes reached President Smith, he called upon the San Francisco police to restore order. By 2:00 P.M., he closed the campus for the rest of the day.

During the next two days, confrontationists came from every direction. Some black militants made guerrilla-type raids into various offices and classrooms. A small explosion and several fires occurred around campus. Some 40 faculty members, responding to the hiring-firing due process implications of Murray's suspension, issued their own strike call if Murray was not restored to faculty status by November 12.

On November 12, the full faculty began a week of nearly continuous general meetings in lieu of teaching classes, while black militants marched in and out of classes that were being taught. The Police Department's Tactical Squad appeared and disappeared, taking photos and making occasional arrests. The first serious violence between police and students occurred on November 13, whereupon President Smith ordered the campus shut down.

In the days that followed, several attempts to reopen classes brought violence and the Tactical Squad back onto campus. Finally, administrators, leaders of the faculty senate, and BSU–TWLF student leaders agreed to conduct a continuing, all-day debate on *television*. The performance ran true to confrontationist form, with student militants condemning the "white oppressors," and walking out on the proceedings during the second day.

President Smith was obviously not without his own confrontationist motivations. While the televised debates were going on, Smith departed for a meeting with the Trustees in Los Angeles. He announced his resignation from the College's presidency on November 26, at the end of a 15-hour session of the Trustees. Chancellor Dumke immediately appointed Dr. S. I. Hayakawa, the renowned semanticist whose name had been associated with the College for years, as Interim Acting President.

Hayakawa had the Thanksgiving holiday as a respite. But at 8:00 A.M., Monday, December 2, as students and militants returned to campus, Acting President Hayakawa, decked out in the tam-o-shanter that has become his campaign symbol, strode over to a striker's sound truck and wrestled for control of the equipment. Student strike leaders were suspended that same day, and for the next two weeks violence, police, and regular TV coverage kept the Busy Majority completely distracted. The local chapter of the American Federation of Teachers called for a strike on December 16, but Hayakawa suddenly announced the beginning of the Christmas vacation a week early, on December 16.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When classes resumed on January 6, little had changed, but the *dramatis personae* had grown remarkably, including a citizens' committee appointed by Mayor Alioto, the San Francisco Area Labor Council, professional arbitrators, and others.

An Ecology of Confrontations

NORTON LONG of the University of Illinois has described local urban politics as "an ecology of games." At San Francisco State, one could call the criss-crossing lines of battle "an ecology of confrontations." The best way to cut through the confusion is to deal with one set of confrontationists at a time, and only with the major ones at that.

• *Blacks* vs. *Negroes*. The difference between these two terms is a difference between aspiring new militant leaders and established older moderates; the difference between the Black Panther party and the NAACP, each of which has its own internal factional version of the militant-moderate debate over tactics. "Militancy" sometimes becomes a euphemism for violence or the threat thereof. Some black leaders who advocate militancy because "it works" are clearly seeking leadership of the ghettos, just as the Jewish gangs of New York, the Irish gangs of Boston, and the Italian gangs of Chicago did before them.

At San Francisco State, the militant-moderate struggle has manifested itself in a number of ways: Minister of Information Cleaver's "put down" of Minister of Education Murray; the incessant tactical debates within the Black Student Union; the prominence of Jerry Varnado, a BSU spokesman who quotes regularly from Che Guevara and whose television appeals are to "the beautiful black people out there"; the presence of black nonstudents during the more violent confrontations.

Above all, it "worked." The sustained television and press coverage has equated Varnado, Murray, and other student militants with the Governor, the Mayor, and the College's numerous presidents. Most significantly, the student militants have brought running to their side older Negro leaders who cannot afford to be bypassed. Dr. Carlton Goodlett —physician, publisher, and often considered "dean" of San Francisco's Negro leaders— joined the demonstrations, submitted to arrest, and was released on bail quickly enough to appear for interviews on TV. San Francisco's only black legislator, State Assemblyman Willie Brown—seriously threatened in his last election campaign by a black militant on the ballot—joined Goodlett. In the light of Instant Majoritarianism, their actions were far more significant than the pronouncements of a committee of Negro ministers who condemned violence and urged moderation.

As far as San Francisco State College and the Bay Area are concerned, an immediate question pertains to the judgment and skill of the black militants themselves. Do they recognize how much they have already won? Can they turn off the violence? Right now confrontationism seems to be a strategy without a plan for termination.

• *AFT* vs. *Other Faculty Organizations*. Faculty in California higher education have an unusual number of organizations seeking to represent them. There is the conservative, strictly bread-and-butter, more than 100,000 civil-servant strong California State Employees Association (CSEA), which has a special section for college faculty. The California Teachers Association, of mainly elementary and secondary school teachers, has a relatively small California College and University Faculty Association (CCUFA). The American Association of University Professors (AAUP), strong at the University, has only recently begun to emerge on college campuses. Perhaps the largest and most active faculty-interest group in recent years has been the Association of California State College Professors (ACSCP). ACSCP's most vigorous challenger has been the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

AFT Local 1352 at San Francisco State is particularly confrontationist in approach.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For several years its 60–100 members have frequently thrown up a picket line or talked strike. It has had a large representation in the College's academic senate. But last year AFT Local 1352 had a hard time on campus. National AFT organizers, after failing to get it to soft-pedal Vietnam, the draft, and other nonunion issues, decided to let this local go its own way. And when the Academic Senate asked the faculty which organization should serve as its bargaining agent, AFT lost out by a small margin to ACSCP.

During the mid-December demonstrations, the AFT decided to piggy-back onto the student strike. It inaugurated a vigorous membership drive, and within a month claimed 400 members and the support of 60–80 per cent of the faculty. On January 3, its president, Gary Hawkins, announced to faculty members not belonging to AFT: "Violating our picket line will be interpreted to mean that you have chosen to be with the Trustees and against us. . . . You will not have the luxury of nice distinctions or Byzantine excuses." Many of the non-AFT faculty, with years of commitment to unionism and liberal causes, found themselves called "fink" and "scab" as they did what they never dreamed they would some day do, that is, cross a picket line.

The non-AFT faculty's problem *vis à vis* the AFT was semantic as well as practical. Was Local 1352 really a "union"? Did it not function more like a political group? The strike had not been called in a unionlike way, that is, *before* rather than *after* negotiating efforts had been initiated. Further, the ACSCP was the faculty's chosen bargaining agent. In fact, it was readily determined from payroll figures (union dues are deducted from pay checks) that the AFT had only 163 members among the 900 regular faculty and 66 members among the 550 part-time faculty —hardly the claimed 400. Finally, the roster of AFT demands, which included support for the student demands, changed from week to week.

Then the question arose whether the AFT strike was really a "strike." The ACSCP, on January 13, announced the results of a secret mail-ballot of the entire faculty on whether or not they supported the AFT strike. Of the 900 regular faculty, 80 per cent cast ballots; voting *against* the strike: 464, or 64 per cent. Of the 551 part-time faculty, 68 per cent responded; 212, or 57 per cent, opposed the strike. At the same time, many of the "strikers" kept leaving the picket lines to teach their classes—usually off-campus—or attend to normal committee, research, or other campus duties. The San Francisco Labor Council, which after much stalling endorsed the strike, had some difficulties in convincing other unions that the College strike was real.

Meanwhile, state officials, particularly Governor Reagan and Chancellor Dumke, became adamant about terminating the services of faculty absent from classes. The state's personnel statutes prescribed that any faculty member absent from normal duties for five consecutive days shall be considered as having resigned. Reagan, whose winding past includes the presidency of an actor's union, issued a "you-can't-have-your-cake-and-eat-it" challenge, recalling that workers really on strike usually really withhold services and really lose their salaries.

What remains to be seen is the judgment and skill with which the leadership of AFT Local 1352 proceeds. Do they realize how much they have already lost? Can they turn off an ill-prepared and poorly-supported "strike" without giving unionism in higher education a permanent setback?

• *Faculties* vs. *Trustees*. The acrimony between the faculties of the state colleges and the Trustees is everywhere evident. The electric response to Smith's resignation as Dean of Education in 1964 was the first faculty protest against second-class status in California higher education. But the 1964 con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

frontation was old-fashioned: petitions, speeches, a resignation, action at the legislature, and no TV.

Then, in 1965, the Trustees voted to correct an administrative error in faculty-salary budgeting by arbitrarily reducing faculty salaries by 1.8 per cent. An *ad hoc* organization, Faculties for the Defense of Education, sprung up on the campuses, again demonstrating the degree of faculty hostility, and receiving only Trustee scorn. By spring 1968, the California State College Academic Senate expressed its profound antipathy to both the Trustees and Chancellor Dumke by voting "no confidence" in Dumke and urging him to resign. Nothing came of the request, a lesson in its own limitations that should not have been lost on the faculties.

At San Francisco State, few events have united the faculty more quickly than some high-handed action by the Trustees or the Chancellor. Faculty endorsement of President Summerskill was unanimous, for example, after the December 6, 1967, rioting, even as the Trustees humiliated him. The faculty supported, by a 2–1 vote, President Smith's agreement to have a continuing convocation; within the week he was compelled to resign because of Trustee intransigence. Conversely, President Hayakawa, acting in concert with Chancellor-Trustee tactics, is a source of widespread nervousness even among his closest faculty friends.

The only confrontationists among the faculty organizations are the AFT leaders, and they have acted accordingly. Will the faculties ever come to appreciate that, under the present statutes and organization governing the State College System, they can only be losers in confrontations with the Trustees? Will the faculties find the skills needed to tackle the large tasks of designing and promoting new legislation for their self-governance and public accountability? Unfortunately, confrontationism requires less homework than do drafting legislative bills and educating busy legislators.

• *Democrats* vs. *Republicans*. The partisan confrontation was explicit in October and November 1968. Republican candidate Rafferty was for law-and-order on the campuses, for "cleaning out" radical professors and hippie students. Democratic candidate Cranston was for organizational reform in higher education and expanded educational opportunities for all.

Less clear at that time were the makings of a confrontation in 1970, when Governor Reagan would run for re-election and San Francisco's Mayor Alioto would be his likeliest Democratic opponent. On the issues of law-and-order and campus unrest, which are bound to be prominent in the 1970 campaign, neither man could politically afford to appear weak or undecided.

In this confrontation, Reagan has several built-in advantages over Alioto. Reagan can dramatically speak of "using bayonets," but it is Alioto's police force that has the day-to-day dirty job. Reagan can safely refuse to negotiate with the militants and the strikers, whereas Alioto, immediately at the tangled scene, has little choice but to seek an avenue toward negotiation, difficult as confrontationism makes this. Every one of Reagan's "tough" comments—as governor—on the crisis generates statewide television coverage; Alioto the moderator has trouble getting balanced San Francisco coverage. The longer the crisis lasts, the fresher will be its tumultuous recollections for Reagan's law-and-order campaign in 1970; for Alioto, divisions among such fellow-Democrats as anti-Trustee Robert R. Smith and pro-Trustee Hayakawa can only be reflected in the 1970 balloting.

• *Liberals* vs. *Conservatives*. For liberals, education is a civilizing force in human development. Education inhibits prejudice and brute passion. Hence, the schools must make their classrooms available to *everyone,* at whatever financial cost to society. And in these classrooms, the students' views and concerns are to be taken raw, to be milled

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and refined by the insights of academic disciplines and by the tests of reason and evidence. Even this oversimplified summary of a liberal view of education makes it easier to understand why liberals are committed to tuition-free higher education, continuing curriculum innovation, active community involvement by both students and teachers, open admissions to all who wish to enroll, and ever-increasing appropriations to support the educational enterprise. As liberal a faculty as that of San Francisco State would be untrue to its basic educational ideology if it did not interpret many of the student and faculty strike demands as worthy of support.

Conservatives, on the other hand, tend toward an elitist conception of education. Some students are simply better and smarter than others, and the social investment in them should vary accordingly. This conception has been embedded in the hierarchical character of higher education in California: the University has the best students and gets the most resources, the colleges rating second best, and the junior colleges even less. Another conservative proposition is that education costs, hence, should be made available only to the loyal, the obedient, and the grateful. Troublesome students and colleges must be cut back in funds and other resources, particularly those as troublesome as San Francisco State. At his January 14 press conference, Governor Reagan was explicit about the "preponderance" of the liberal political viewpoint on college and university faculties; he argued that a better representation of other viewpoints needs to be achieved. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Max Rafferty is also succinct: the solution for SF State is "less students and less faculty." If SF State and other liberal colleges were half their present size, such reductions would penalize the "trouble-makers" and cut off the supply of "radical-liberal" citizens (who become voters) at the source. These views make the educational conservatives like Reagan and Rafferty eager and provocative confrontationists; the worse the crisis, the more quickly will faculty and students depart from the campus. Why struggle with cut-backs of college resources in budget-writing sessions when campus crises will do the job with less effort?

On the California campuses this confrontation is nothing less than a struggle for the minds and attitudes of the next generation of citizens. The stakes are therefore higher than the 1970 election or the survival of SF State. Poor judgment and little skill are disastrous in such a contest, as the liberal faculties have and will undoubtedly continue to learn. In fact, armies as small as the educational liberals' need extraordinary judgment in matches against larger forces.

In California, the liberals run the immediate risk of losing their basic idiom, either by letting it fumble out of their own hands or by having it stolen right out from under their typewriter ribbons by the conservative confrontationists. To illustrate the first prospect, consider the action of the SF State Academic Senate in establishing a special committee made up of *only* the black members of the full-time faculty to create in turn a special personnel committee to determine the retention and promotion of Dr. Nathan Hare, the Black Studies Department chairman. The Senate's Ad Hoc Committee on the campus crisis, composed—just as is the Senate—of liberals of long standing, enunciated the rationalization as follows:

> . . . Any attempt to make the Black Studies Department comply with the process by which a typical department achieves its agent's autonomy [in making academic appointments in the name of the College] is hopeless. Not because [that Department] hasn't a legitimate program with standards, but because we are white and they are black, and because this is no time for whites to say to blacks: "You must convince us of your standards before you proceed. . . ."

These are *liberal* professors instituting a segregationist dichotomy between white and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

black as the basis for a return to separate-but-equal arrangements in education. These are *liberals* arguing for the principle that a judgment about professional competence *should be* (we recognize that it too often *is*) made on the basis of race.

The second prospect—of having the liberal idiom stolen by the conservatives—is just as insidious. The most conservative members of the Board of Trustees, for example, have raised the obvious liberal questions about nondiscrimination in hiring practices of the Black Studies Department. Another example is Reagan's objection to limiting instruction to any single philosophy or ideology. His "trust and faith" lies "in the students' ability to hear varying points of view and to make . . . an intelligent decision." This is liberal vocabulary, but without liberal intent; e.g., Reagan's campaign to deny Eldridge Cleaver at the University and George Murray at the College status as temporary instructors.

In short, confrontationism, by rendering the liberals self-contradictory or speechless, has afforded the conservative confrontationists an opportunity to co-opt the language of liberalism as part of their campaign to undermine liberalism. Even the ordinarily vocal Max Rafferty has taken a back-seat on the higher education issue in recent months lest his hard-line get in the way of Reagan and the Trustees.

The Political Pathology of Confrontationism

IN MANY RESPECTS, confrontation is an ancient political tactic, in which leaders of a coalition isolate a common enemy against whom they may remain united, or flush an elusive adversary out into the open, or test a specific issue or degree of strength, etc. Traditional confrontations have been potent weapons of dissent in open societies. Since the thirties trade unionists and civil libertarians have been the most persistent and successful users of traditional confrontation. These are precisely the people presently most confused and distraught about contemporary confrontationism. Witness the ambivalence of campus liberals—whether at SF State, Berkeley, or Columbia—union liberals, and civil-rights liberals. Does the confusion arise out of the impulse to withhold teaching services at a time when more and better instruction is needed as a civilizing instrument? or out of the crossing of a picket line in a nonstrike called by a nonbargaining agent? or out of the separationist demands of militant Negroes whose "integration" into the grand opportunities of American life has been one's goal for decades? Have all these values gone topsy-turvy?

Contemporary confrontationism is a greater and more insidious threat to the open society than mere confusion of values and slogans. The dangers of this threat are inherent in the technological characteristics of confrontationism—that is, Instant Majoritarianism, Instant Equality, and Instant Replay.

• *Instant Majoritarianism.* "Power" is often more in the eyes of the viewer than in the resources of the "powerful." Majority rule is a normal basis of power in the United States, except for those stubborn minorities who know how to filibuster in the U.S. Senate, etc. "Powerfulness," therefore, is being so perceived by others, usually *on the basis of something real and observable* such as many guns, much money, many words, or most votes.

Confrontationism, on the other hand, employs appearances and illusion rather than observable realities in order to elicit perceptions of "powerfulness." Thus, the Black Panther who shouts "kill, kill" (instead of teaching the English language, which he does so well), the Mexican-American student with his four-letter expletives (instead of the poetry he writes so well), the distortion on the face of the faculty member who shouts "scab" and "fink" at some long-beloved colleague, the crowding of small numbers of demonstrators into narrow parking lots and street corners to be filmed as a "mob," the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

planting of stink bombs that might yet become real bombs, the starting of small skirmishes to bring out platoons of police. Ordinary people, even at an off-beat college, view these manifestations as fearsome and, knowingly or not, easily attribute "power" to those who employ such appearances and tactics. In this way, we have seen, the powerful come to be perceived as weak or vacillating, and the minority to be as "powerful" as a majority. In other words, this is Instant Majoritarianism.

The danger of Instant Majoritarianism lies in the persistence of illusion untied to a negotiating and legislative process. Only in fairy tales does the mirror respond to the princess, and even there, odds are she was talking to herself. With the inadvertent aid of television and other mass media, Instant Majoritarianism threatens to make "due process" and the more traditional modes of petition and dissent not obsolete but irrelevant in America.

• *Instant Equality.* George Orwell saw the danger of this characteristic of confrontationism when he wrote the slogans of the Party: WAR IS PEACE. FREEDOM IS SLAVERY. IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH. The danger lies in compressing a many-sided problem into a two-sided one and in equating the two elements in every dichotomy. The cost of unraveling some dichotomies into the complexities they really are can become oppressive if not overwhelming. Consider the cost of destroying the deceitful notion of SEPARATE BUT EQUAL. Consider the cost of demonstrating that the conflict in Vietnam is between more parties than the United States and North Vietnam. The danger is more than semantic. These particular false dichotomies were embedded in elaborate principles; significant segregationist and military behaviors were the consequence of each.

The ease and cheapness of achieving Instant Equality through the technology of confrontationism is too attractive to ignore. To get the cameras and the press onto the scene requires little more than phone calls reporting an imminent inflammatory pronouncement, or a rumor of plans for violence. This process gets to the point where tactical inventiveness is the order of the day for all sides; e.g., President Hayakawa's lone attack upon the strikers' sound truck—very photogenic! Here again, appearances—televised and headlined—are a danger to reality, but an even greater danger to reason. For, if WAR equals PEACE, why worry about either?

• *Instant Replay.* In this technological attribute lies the very difficult problem of professionalism in American journalism. The current reportorial style of badgering rather than interviewing a public figure illustrates the problem. A logical line of questioning can usually cut to the truth of a newsworthy situation with greater precision than the meat-ax of a reporter's insult. But logical questioning is taken to be a bore, both on TV and in the headline that must be distilled from the event. Speed, brevity, and action *demand* that the interview become a confrontation. How else will the coverage compete with other exciting news for the evening broadcasts?

The traditional journalistic problem is to tell what is new and significant in an understandable and interesting manner. This dull professional dictum is quickly translated by the unprofessional into: "Tell what is last-minute and violent or controversial, and do so in one-syllable words, breathlessly; the expert analyses can come later."

The danger of Instant Replay is of the dimension of the McCarthy Era in American history. Instant Replay may define the components of an event in a pattern impossible to undo by subsequent reportage. Its description of violence may open the floodgates to otherwise inhibited violence elsewhere. Its unrepresentativeness and exaggerations may disrupt a firmly established public consensus. Its incomplete facts may become permanent public illusions.

At San Francisco State College, the day,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the academic year, and perhaps the entire generation will continue to submit to the initiatives of the principal practitioners of confrontationism on both sides. More grave than our local problem is the question whether American society will be able to hear and attend to the legitimate, the burning problems of its students, teachers, Negroes, Mexican-Americans, and other dissidents, if it continues to be distracted by the tactics of confrontationism.

February 16, 1969

FOR MONTHS Governor Reagan had served as the principal public confrontationist for the Chancellor and the 21 Trustees. The latter were flushed out of their relative silence on February 11 by George Johns, Secretary of the San Francisco Labor Council. Johns reported near-agreement on all but one stipulation of a proposed settlement. The exception was a grievance procedure which he said had been "shot down" by the Trustees. As he angrily called a halt to his many weeks of negotiating effort, Johns charged that the Trustees were closely "prepared to fight it to a finish" regardless of the consequences for the faculty, the students, the College, or the City of San Francisco. Among the consequences already in view was an unofficial estimate that enrollment for the spring semester would be down by 30 per cent. Thus, with about 200 faculty having "resigned" and over 5,000 students having departed, the Trustees will have "solved" the San Francisco State College fiscal crisis. Obviously, in their judgment, the educational crisis could be dealt with some other year.

The situation looks worse and worse.

You are cordially invited to a

BENEFIT AND REUNION
for the Young People's Socialist League

Saturday, March 29

8:00 P.M.

THE MARC BALLROOM
27 Union Square West
New York City

Free Drinks • Buffet Supper • Entertainment
• Meet with old friends and 'new generation' Yipsels •

Tickets $10

Greetings in YPSL Journal: $15/$10/or $5

Order Now from: Y.P.S.L.

1182 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10001

BENEFIT SPONSORS (Partial listing): Hyman Bookbinder/James Farmer/
Sam Fishman/Robert Gilmore/Michael Harrington/Darlington Hoopes/
Irving Howe/Arnold S. Kaufman/S. M. Lipset/Emanuel Muravchik/Norman Podhoretz/
John Roche/Bayard Rustin/Albert Shanker/Leon Shull/Don Slaiman/
Sol Stetin/Harold Taylor/Gus Tyler/Jerry Wurf/Jacob T. Zukerman

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Gerald Dworkin

The Hippies: Permanent Revolution?

> You know, on the waterfront, the richest longshoremen are all ex-Communists. Actually from my own experience, I would say that the Communist Party in the United States is a vehicle for transforming true believers into successful real estate dealers.
> —*Eric Hoffer*

THE HIPPIES are merely the latest in a continuous series of revolts by a younger generation against its fathers, both literal and symbolic. The process has become so much a natural development that it no longer occasions surprise—although always some resentment. It is assumed that the young will sow their wild oats and mature into respectability by middle age. Generational revolts—political, moral, artistic, sexual—all come to an end.

I want to suggest that the Hippies really *are* different, that there are reasons for supposing that this revolt may be permanent in a way all other revolts have not been. I shall indicate reasons which support this conclusion but I am not going to try and evaluate the data in any systematic way. I neither ran experiments nor made any observation that is beyond the competence of anyone willing to spend some time with Hippies, talking and listening with a sympathetic ear. My own experience and some of the data I have are drawn from the Haight-Ashbury and Berkeley communities.

Most serious as opposed to "plastic" Hippies have now left the Haight, moving to other parts of San Francisco or what promises to be the most interesting new development—to rural communes. Still, I think the points I make are generally true of the Hippie culture, and local variations will not be important.

What, then, distinguishes the Hippies from the generation of Communists who now teach conservative sociology in the academic establishment or make reactionary foreign policy in Foggy Bottom? Why won't they fade into insignificance like the Beats or become insurance salesmen like the Bohemians of the 20's? Why are these youths different from all other youth?

No one can understand what it means to be a Hippie without understanding the decisive role of drugs. Every culture has its rituals, its own way of establishing group identity, and for the Hippie world it is dropping acid. The use of pot will not distinguish the Hippie from the non-Hippie. Pot is too respectable, too middleclass. Pot is euphoric, acid explosive. Pot is safe (everyone knows this even if it's not news fit to print); acid is potentially dangerous. Pot makes you happy; acid blows your mind. And it is this last bit which is significant for my hypothesis. It is at least possible—we don't know enough to say probable—that the long-range effects of regular use of psychedelics will make it impossible to live as the American way of life demands. There is a good deal of loose talk about changes in consciousness induced by the regular taking of psychedelics; still, the conception is not to be dismissed lightly. There is some evidence coming in on the nature of the physiological changes that take place—both in genetic and brain structure. Some of it is hysterical, or at least this is true of the publicity attached to the research reports. Still it is not unlikely that there will soon be hard data on the possible physiological effects of LSD and other hallucenogenics.

Ultimately, however, the psychological changes will be more important. It seems improbable that a Hippie who has taken a hundred trips could settle down to be a used-car salesman. Whether or not they have found God—as many claim—there do seem to be important changes in values associated with the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

taking of these drugs. "Head" drugs are different from "body" drugs. We know that doctors, who carry on normal lives in all other respects, form one of the largest groups of morphine addicts. As long as they get their daily dose they can function efficiently. But it is significant that morphine addicts have no ideology. Their world isn't changed as a result of their use of drugs. The world of the Hippie is a different world—more mystical, more enthusiastic. It is surrounded by music of a special kind, by social relationships of a unique character, by values antithetical to the dominant morality. Clearly it is a complicated question to decide which came first—the drugs or the rejection of bourgeois society. All I am suggesting is that the emphasis on the use of psychedelics by the Hippies makes them different from other generational revolts and that the long-range effects, both psychological and physiological, may make it difficult for the Hippies to be re-absorbed into the mainstream of American life.

EVERY GENERATIONAL REVOLT involves a rejection of a larger or smaller part of the dominant values of the society. That is what makes it a revolt and not a fad. But the Hippies are involved in a more radical rejection than other rebels have been. Compare the Hippies with any of the radical political sects of the 30's. Surely, it might be claimed, the very notion of a political radical involves a basic break with the fundamental tenets of the powers-that-be. What more could a Hippie do than attack the profit motive, private property, the business ethic? Yet even while, say, a Communist was denouncing his society, he accepted values that were essential to the society. If he was a good party member, he attended meetings faithfully and attended them on time; he accepted party discipline. He listened to his leaders, accepted responsibility for selling a certain number of *Daily Workers* each week, for raising a given quota of money for the fund drive, etc.

The values and mode of life of the Hippie run counter to all this. He doesn't raise money: he burns it. He doesn't accept leadership: each individual is his own trip leader. The thought of attending a meeting is enough to turn him off completely.

(The Yippies who might be thought to be a counter-example are not really. I attended a conference of the New Left in Chicago last spring which met to decide what kind of political action to take at the Democratic convention. The Yippies were there in full force—Krasner, Hoffman, Rubin—and spent most of the time denouncing the proceedings as bullshit and calling for a demonstration of love and acid-rock. Still, even this degree of politicization represents an interesting change from the view expressed a year ago that the only power is flower-power.)

Very crudely my point could be put as follows: It's not a very large step to go from being a labor organizer to being a personnel manager for IBM. If one ran a mimeograph machine for the Socialist Worker's party, one could run a Xerox machine for the local insurance company.

Naturally, there is an ideological shift which has to come first and there are many persons who remain faithful to their early ideological commitments—although many more have abandoned them. What is essential for my argument is the relative ease or difficulty of abandoning one's youthful commitments, and I am arguing that in many respects it's going to be harder for a Hippie to "drop in."

Consider also, the radical break made by the Hippies in their attempt to break down traditional conceptions of sexual identity. Previous revolts took the form of calling for extensions of traditional sexual paths—free love, communal marriages. The Hippies have gone beyond that. Their sex is androgynous; their beauty ideal neither clearly defined as masculine or feminine. It is not so much a homosexual emphasis (although a recent Haight-Ashbury survey reports 37 per cent of the males and 24 per cent of the females as having engaged in some form of homosexual activity) as a pan-sexualism. The long hair is an attempt to defy the traditional ways of classifying individuals on the basis of superficial characteristics, and straight people are aware of this, reserving some of their choicest venom for this part of the Hippie life-style.

There is another fact that is relevant to the question of permanence. All previous generational breaks took place at a fairly late stage in the maturation process. The most usual time

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was late adolescence and the beginning of college life. The exact age varies—with the Beats it was a bit later, with many radical youths a bit earlier. But in all these cases the individuals involved were fully acculturated into the dominant mores of the society. What is significant about the Hippies is that the break is taking place at a much younger age. The teenie-boppers are a growing phenomenon and it is not uncommon to find eleven-year-olds who have left their family and are living in some kind of communal setup. This generation is never fully acculturated. The whole notion of dating, for example, strikes these kids as weird. It is easier for them to ignore the role of money in our society for the very good reason that they have never been entrusted with it or the responsibilities connected with it. It is usually during the teen-age years that many of the attitudes connected with making a living, caring about material possessions, looking to the products of mass culture for one's idols, are developed. By circumventing these routes, by having just that much less time for patterns to be built in, the Hippies are provided with just that much more freedom to ignore conventional paths.

Another fairly important development, still in too early a stage to be assessed fully, is what the sociologists would call the "breakdown of the nuclear family and a return to the extended family." What this means in English is that the typical Hippie household is not two parents and 2.5 children, but rather a heterogeneous grouping of six or eight people, some of them, perhaps, being children, linked to each other by ties which are in many ways family-like. Important decisions are made corporately, possessions are shared, children are cared for by whoever is around and in good condition, sexual partners are not clearly demarcated. For many teen-age Hippies, this represents the first family structure that they identify with and which provides a model for living that is greatly at variance with the standard models of the society.

How important these anthropological facts are, just how much they *are* facts, would require empirical investigation; but I think they are significant.

Finally, there is what might be called the Marxist angle. Any society must meet certain basic economic requirements, must find ways of wresting food, shelter, etc. from its environment. Previous rebels have had to return to the fold because they found no way of sustaining themselves outside the market economy. Their efforts at being self-sustaining flopped. Attempts, such as those of the Beats, to compromise by working on a part-time basis were usually not stable. I think the Hippies can make it economically for a number of reasons, the main one being that this is a very affluent society and it is welfare oriented. It is not prepared to see any substantial proportion of its youth die of starvation or illness —particularly if the youth is middle-class and white. And statistically the Hippies are overwhelmingly WASPS; one survey shows 1 per cent Negro, 3 per cent Jews. The parents of the Hippies are not about to cut them off from support no matter how long they maintain their break. Unlike working-class parents who at some point will just give up, the checks from middle-class poppa will flow eternally.

Second, it is a good bet that some time in the near future we will see some form of guaranteed income at least on a subsistence level. But even if this didn't pan out, there are the indigenous ways of making money—panhandling, pushing, selling Hippie newspapers, etc. (Note on pan-handling: I followed a very Hippie-looking chick down Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley, who confined her pan-handling, oddly enough, only to fellow Hippies—some kind of queer principle at work there—and did amazingly well. I wasn't close enough to make an accurate check, but it looked like about a buck and a half in four blocks.)

For more sophisticated types, there is access to the increasing commercialization of Hippie clothing, music, art work, etc. But this may only be a fad and if they are to last, Hippies will have to fall back on the other sources I mentioned. Remember: Hippies need very little money. One estimate I heard from a girl who was living with seven other people in the Haight was $48 a month. If this seems like very little, consider that there are a number of free goods and services available to Hippies. And what might be a major expense—entertainment—is minor for the Hippies. As one nymphet observed: "We fuck for fun." This doesn't quite exhaust the resources,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but drugs are fairly inexpensive. (A new one is introduced almost every week which brings free samples for market promotion.) And Hippies do not buy books. They don't even steal them; they are a fairly non-literate breed. Music is the basic staple of culture and is enjoyed communally, hence economically.

WHAT I have been arguing is that in all the dimensions—biological, physiological, psychological, sociological, economic—the breaks are so far-reaching that it will be much more difficult for Hippies to backslide. Compare for example an ex-bohemian or ex-radical father explaining to his children why he now works as an advertising executive or stockbroker and the kinds of rationalizations available to him (maturity, responsibility for a growing family, you can't change the system, duped) with those either necessary or available to a Hippie drop-out.

There are objections that could be raised to each of my arguments. For example: to the economic point—when they're 35 their parents will be dead or stop supporting them. Then they'll have to get a regular job. To the physiological argument about drugs—these effects are not long-term. Or perhaps they only produce drastic value shifts in conjunction with a psychological "set" that only takes place at the time of adolescence. And there is no doubt that with the commercialization of the Hippie—particularly in the area of fashion—some Hippies may be able to "do their thing" and "make it" at the same time. Still I think the kinds of considerations I have advanced should make one cautious about the inevitability of a return to the womb of the "Great Society." It may be later than we thought.

George Eckstein

PERSPECTIVE

...is the official magazine of the Harvard-Radcliffe Young People's Socialist League, the largest YPSL chapter in the nation.

...contains both scholarly and political analysis by young people on the democratic Left.

...features first issue articles on eyewitness in Czechoslovakia; the McCarthy movement, the New Left, and the middle class; and the theory of electoral participation.

***PERSPECTIVE*, 169 Memorial Hall, Cambridge, Mass. 02138**

——— current issue; 50¢

——— four-issue subscription $1.50

——— special supporting subscription, $5 or $10

(Make checks payable to *Perspective Magazine*)

Name .....

Address .....

Apocalyptic Weekend

IN HIS LATEST FILM, *Weekend*, Jean-Luc Godard attacks the phenomenon of violence. He piles horror on horror—adds gore, callousness, perversion, brutality, all culminating in cannibalism. Not since Hieronymus Bosch and Goya have we been exposed to such ghastly pictorial visions.

As the chief symbol of this brutality Godard uses the automobile, the Moloch of our time. But where in his earlier film, *Pierrot le Fou*, the automobile served the hero and heroine in their quest for a meaningful life, in *Weekend* it reveals their greeed, brutality, and callousness. Corinne and Roland, a chic young couple, spend the weekend driving to the village of her parents, in order to extort money from her dying father.

Like the heroes of old, they undergo innumerable tribulations and encounter a variety of people, symbolic representatives of social forces and ideas: they drive past bloody wrecks, through pyres on the highways; are detoured by a Christlike hippie who forces them to expose their greed; lose their car in a flaming collision. They wander on, hitchhiking, asking

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their way from a large variety of people: from hostile strangers who subject them to juvenile game interrogations ("Would you rather sleep with Mao or Johnson?"—"For Israel or Egypt?"—"Film or Reality?"); from a group of wandering Italian movie actors; from mythical-historical figures in fairytale encounters; from a hobo who rapes Corinne by the roadside while Roland, unperturbed, looks out for passing cars; from the colored crew of a garbage truck who subject them to humiliation and an endless Frantz Fanon speech.

When they finally reach their destination Oinville (Pigtown?), father is dead, mother won't part with the dough and is brutally killed, blood gushing into the street, over a skinned rabbit she had been carrying. The multi-million inheritance now within reach, they set out on their way back to Paris, hold up a group of picnickers for food and a car, and are in turn captured by a band of young Yippie-type guerrillas camped in the woods, Indian-fashion, with evocations of Walden Pond and Whitmanesque poetry. There is a Ché-ish leader, a jazz drummer, and a sadistic cook. In a final paroxysm of Bosch-like sadism, Roland is killed and cooked, and Corinne takes up with the guerrilla leader. As so often with Godard, the female of the species survives as the stronger one, in this case literally devouring the male, and presumably joining the wave of the future.

WE ARE LEFT overwhelmed with Godard's visions of horror, projected through his customary cinematic devices to produce a Brechtian effect of detachment:

- *casualness in face of the monstrous (Corinne's "Gosh, I left my Hermès bag in the car," as she emerges from the flaming pyre of a multiple collision, corpses strewn about);*
- *the asides to the audience ("What a shitty film, one meets only sick people");*
- *lettered titles, often with terrible puns ("Analyse, Faux-tographe"), but sometimes with savage irony ("Faux Raccords"—False Reunion—the heroine eating a stew containing pieces of her slain husband);*
- *borrowings from and allusions to other films and film-makers (Bergmann, Bunuel,* Monsieur Verdoux, Bonnie and Clyde, Parapluies de Cherbourg).

To these are added some daring new devices, long passages, not all of them fully successful, but all skilful:

- *the slow, muted, dimly backlit opening scene of the young heroine, almost nude, with hardly perceptible changes of position, exciting her husband with the whispered report on a sex orgy in which she served as a catalyst for a Lesbian friend and her impotent husband;*
- *the interminable tracking shot of a mile-long traffic jam, with its violent abuse and cacophony of horns, culminating in a bloody crash scene with piercing sirens and flashing ambulance lights;*
- *the idyllic interlude of a gentle pianist playing Mozart in a barnyard to bored farmhands and bystanders (a satire of "culture to the people"?);*
- *several fairytale encounters of the wandering couple with historical and literary figures: with a Marquis de Sade philosophizing on "Liberty=Violence" and "the knife in the garage"; with Emily Brontë whom they drench with gasoline and burn.*

In his inventiveness, as in his ability to render pictorially the ludicrous and the barbaric aspects of our mores, Godard is unsurpassed. He is politically more sophisticated than Richard Lester, less melodramatic than Fellini, much more radical than Mike Nichols. At times his inventiveness runs away with him, and *Weekend* would gain by some judicious editing.

"Man inspires only horror in his fellow man." One wonders whether Godard, in trying to make his point, has not overdrawn his picture. He drenches us in gore, depravity, and callousness. By exaggerating beyond reality, it is true, he transposes the horrors to a symbolic plane and thus renders them bearable (although he lapses into unbearable reality when he makes us witness the actual slaughter of actual animals). Still, the question arises whether he does not in some way defeat his own purpose. Could it be—as Frederic Wertham maintains—that a film like *Weekend* contributes to the blunting of our sensibilities, helps to condition us to the very brutality against which Godard presumably wants to arouse us? They are dangerous heroes: Marquis de Sade, for whom Freedom equals Violence, and Frantz Fanon, for whom Violence equals Freedom—and both of them titillating a young intellectual elite in a society in which Violence comes more and more to equal Violence for its own sake.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mulford Q. Sibley

A History of U.S. Pacifism

PACIFISM IN THE UNITED STATES: FROM THE COLONIAL ERA TO THE FIRST WORLD WAR. by Peter Brock. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1005 pp. $18.50.

WITH MUCH SKILL, Peter Brock has sought to tie together the many strands in the history of American pacifism from colonial times to 1914. Much of the material will be familiar to the students of the American peace movement, and a considerable part builds on earlier works of E. N. Wright, Devere Allen, and many others. Perhaps the most original chapters deal with such groups as the Mennonites, Amish, and Shakers. At times, however, one tends to get so lost in detail that the major themes are forgotten.

The antecedents of American pacifism, of course, lay in the European background of Anabaptism, the Quakerism of the seventeenth century, and, more remotely, in the attitudes of early Christians.

Pacifist-oriented groups played an important role in many of the early colonies—in Rhode Island, for example, where Quakers were active in politics for many years and, above all, in Pennsylvania. The Quakerism of William Penn and his associates established the precedents which were to be followed, in varying degrees, until the middle of the eighteenth century. Many legitimate criticisms of the "holy experiment" have been offered, not the least of which is the one that calls attention to the compromises accepted by the Quaker-dominated legislature. The experiment remains, nevertheless, one of the most remarkable in the history of mankind.

Elsewhere in the colonies the Quaker witness was also made. During King Philip's War (1675–1676), unarmed Quakers were unharmed, though surrounded by Indians on the warpath. In 1711, during the War of the Spanish Succession (surely one of the most atrocious, absurd, and utterly futile wars in the long history of mankind), we find Governor Alexander Spotswood, of Virginia, writing to Lord Dartmouth:

> I have been mightily embarrassed by a set of Quakers who broach doctrines so monstrous as their brethren in England never owned, nor, indeed, can be suffered by any government. They have not only refused to work themselves, or suffer any of their servants to be employed in the fortifications, but affirm that their consciences will not permit them to contribute in any manner . . . to the defence of the country. . . .

Mennonites and Amish differed from Quakers in that they utterly repudiated "politics" and were much more pessimistic than Quakers in their view of man. Theirs was an ethic of withdrawal into rather self-sufficient agricultural communities.

During the Revolution, Quakers officially discouraged payment of most taxes to the revolutionary governments, partly on pacifist grounds and partly because they took seriously their allegiance to the British government. Some fled to Canada; others suffered confiscation of material goods for their refusal to pay taxes. Most would have nothing to do with the militia. Those few Quaker youths who did go to war were expelled from their Meetings.

The period from the Revolution to the Civil War saw the development of a nondenominational peace movement, with the founding of regional peace societies and, in 1828, the establishment of the American Peace Society. Later on, the New England Non-Resistance Society—devoted to both "no government" and peace causes—and the League of Universal Brotherhood represented radical pacifist sentiment. Tension between pacifists—those who repudiated all war and violence—and non-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pacifists—who rejected only "aggressive" wars —plagued the peace movement. Then, too, many pacifists were active in the cause of abolition; and for them, the question arose of whether they would accept war if it was ostensibly necessary to abolish slavery. Some pacifists—like the very remarkable Elihu Burritt —retained their pacifism unimpaired. Others surrendered it. Yet others—and William Lloyd Garrison is perhaps the best example—continued to preach pacifism in principle but in effect supported the Civil War.

Mennonites, Amish, Quakers, and Brethren (Dunkards) by and large remained true to their convictions during the Civil War. Many suffered imprisonment and some—in the South particularly—had to flee their homes. For the most part, Quakers refused to "buy" substitutes for the army or to pay the $300 required to gain exemption from service under the Draft Law.

The prewar pacifist movement had dissolved, in effect, a decade before the war. After the conflict, it was revived with the establishment of the Universal Peace Union. The Union, intimately associated with the activities of such men as Alfred Love, included in its membership many veterans who had been disillusioned with all war. Unlike the American Peace Society and similar segments of the peace movement, the Union refused to distinguish between allegedly defensive and aggressive wars. Acting consistently, it opposed the Spanish-American War, was accused of unpatriotic actions, and gradually faded from the scene.

In the years immediately before World War I, American pacifists increasingly turned to a study of the causes of war in the economic and social order. While early Quakers were acutely aware of the relation between war and social injustice, pacifists sometimes had ignored the wider ramifications of their position. With the development of socialist thought, many now sought to remedy the deficiency. The influence of the Tolstoyans also made itself felt.

CUTTING ACROSS all periods and schools of American pacifism have been a number of rather sharply defined issues, which constitute a challenge not only to pacifists but also to all who are sensitive to moral and political questions:

• *What Should Be the Basis of Pacifism?* Should one ground the repudiation of all violence—as did most early Quakers—on an Inner Light which demands obedience regardless of supposed consequences; or should one, by contrast, base one's position primarily on "humanitarian" and economic grounds? In general, the former attitude might hold that a byproduct of pacifism would be a more nearly humane society, but that the moral basis must transcend merely "utilitarian" considerations. "For Quakers, peace came to mean following the way of love that begins in the hearts of individuals and through them leavens society until all men are won."

• *Pacifism and Government*: One of the most vexing questions has turned on pacifist perspectives with respect to government. From the very beginning, pacifists have taken rather diverse positions. Broadly speaking, the history of American pacifism reveals three fundamental attitudes:

(1) In the Mennonite and Amish tradition, government is viewed as a necessary negative force for those who still live in the "world" and need to be restrained by coercion and even war. But for withdrawn pacifists—those who do not participate in complex society—active involvement in government must be repudiated. The world cannot be transformed by "political" methods, which always tend to result in violence. At best, the coercion pacifists of this type associate with government is a kind of holding action against evil.

(2) This second attitude, represented by Quakerism and certain other viewpoints, looks upon government as potentially a positive and constructive force, even though historically it has often been merely negative and suppressive. William Penn thought of true government and true religion as virtually one. Pacifists who accept this position will become involved in politics, even though they know its perils. But they will try to draw a line between the essentially destructive activities so often associated with government in the past—war, for example—and its constructive works. In Pennsylvania, under Quaker control, a careful distinction was made between police work and war; and since the seventeenth century, many Quakers have tried to develop this undoubtedly valid distinction. (Incidentally, Quakers are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at work today in one large American city trying to help train the police in forms of nonviolence.)

(3) Pacifists of the third type are "no-government" men—essentially pacifist anarchists. This view was a major tendency in the New England Non Resistance Society and in American Tolstoyans of the early twentieth century. How to implement such an attitude was, of course, always a problem. At times, the second pacifist position has faded into the third or the third has in practice given way to the second.

• *Personal Conduct and Pacifism*: If one repudiates all war and warlike acts, how should one conduct oneself in a society where war is built into the structure of things? This question has puzzled American pacifists from the very beginning. The Mennonite-Amish position (shared by certain other groups as well) has traditionally been that living in a complex society is incompatible with a thoroughly exemplified nonviolence; for commerce, trade, and politics inevitably force one to be involved in violent activities. The only way to avoid unacceptable compromise is to live a relatively self-sufficient life, repudiating the fruits of complexity and thus avoiding the more egregious commitments to violence. Mennonite critics have rightly called attention to the serious compromises into which Quakers were virtually forced so long as they were active in Pennsylvania commerce and politics.

Short of the extreme withdrawal position—which has its own ethical and other difficulties—pacifists have sought to exemplify their view not only by refusing service in the militia and army but also by rejecting activities that substantially support military violence. In varying degrees, they have confronted the tax problem. Generally speaking, Quakers were willing to pay taxes "in the mixture"—that is, when war taxes were not isolated from general imposts—but frequently they were unwilling to pay specifically designated war taxes. After the Revolutionary War and after the Civil War, not a few former soldiers became convinced pacifists, and the question arose as to whether they should accept their pensions as veterans. Some did; but many did not, often in the face of dire poverty. For those involved in manufacturing and commerce, the issue often arose as to how one could retain one's vocation and yet sell or manufacture goods which in part might be used to sustain military violence. Again, the answers varied; but wherever the line was drawn, it often reflected acute and painful consciousness of the problem of preserving personal integrity in an interdependent world. Historically, too, living on the frontier created many dilemmas for the pacifist.

WHATEVER one may think about the general philosophy of pacifism—and here we have been barely able to skim a few questions—it touches on some of the most basic issues of human life. It raises, of course, the perturbing problem of means and ends. How can one select violent means and yet come out with nonviolent ends? This issue troubled John Dewey, despite his support of World War I. Yet most liberals in our time do not really face up to it. Surely, pacifism cannot be ignored in a day when men destroy towns in order to "liberate" them; when we arm with missiles to preserve "freedom," kill others *en masse* in the name of "progress," and threaten the destruction of mankind on the plea of "defense." Surely, something is basically wrong (as all pacifists argue) with a world in which millions of generally humane men—including professed radicals—tolerate and even support such propositions. Is the pacifist any more "unrealistic" than the general and the orthodox politician when he insists that we cannot make war for peace (the road to peace is peace, as the late A. J. Muste used to say); when he argues that the only way to cut through the cycle of violence and counterviolence is to refuse to surrender to either, regardless of the nobility of the ends professed; and when he maintains that genuine revolution is incompatible with violent means, since violence has always been a characteristic method of essentially exploitative and inegalitarian societies?

Radicals particularly should examine pacifism, which with all its difficulties and dilemmas—and they are many—surely makes more sense, even politically, than the spectacle of a Che Guevara trying to arouse illiterate peasants to kill others in the name of their own liberation; or the picture of a highly armed and bureaucratic Soviet or Chinese power structure emancipating the exploited; or the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

confidence that armed blacks will, by turning to the methods of their oppressors, evade the ends of oppression; or the curious hope that a greatly expanded Pentagon, employing germ warfare and deadly missiles, has something to do with preserving "democracy." Perhaps the pacifist—with whom the term "naive" is so often associated, sometimes legitimately—is the little child in Andersen's fairy tale who, when the sophisticated all see the naked Emperor as clothed, shouts out in his innocence, "But the Emperor has nothing on!"

Leon V. Sigal

U.S. Interventionism

INTERVENTION AND REVOLUTION: AMERICA'S CONFRONTATION WITH INSURGENT MOVEMENTS AROUND THE WORLD, by Richard J. Barnet. New York: New American Library (World Publishers). 320 pp. $.6.95.

RADICAL CRITICS of American foreign policy often look to America's socio-economic structure for the source of recent foreign policy failures, while reformist critics blame the decision-making structure. The critics' prescriptions range from altering the pattern of ownership of the means of production to giving Congress more authority to make policy. In *Intervention and Revolution* Richard Barnet eschews the analyses and prescriptions of both groups and seeks to explain America's policy predilections in terms of the values and interests of the national security bureaucracy and to offer arguments for an alternative set of values. His is a radical critique aimed at "the hearts and minds" of reformers.

Mr. Barnet discerns in American policy a consistent pattern of unilateral interventionism to suppress insurgent movements around the world. He proceeds from a detailed examination of four postwar interventions (Greece, Lebanon, the Dominican Republic, Vietnam), plus brief glimpses at others (Iran, Guatemala, Indonesia, British Guiana, the Congo), to the conclusion that a "bureaucratic imperialism," not economic imperialism, fuels America's drive in the world arena:

> Classic theories of economic imperialism, which view the state as an agent of the most powerful domestic economic interests, underestimate the independent role of the national-security bureaucracy, which in the United States has taken on a life and movement of its own. It has the money and power at its disposal to develop within very broad limits its own conception of the national interest.

American intervention abroad usually entails the takeover of some functions of foreign governments by American bureaucrats. This new role has its reward for officials and its consequences for policy pressures:

> Many Americans have found an outlet for social and political experimentation on new frontiers abroad that is denied them at home. Since the overseas bureaucracy totals some two to four million individuals, it constitutes in itself an impressive group with a vested interest in keeping the mechanics of foreign relations much as they are.

A rambling presentation and little relationship between cases and analysis often obscures the brilliance of Mr. Barnet's central thesis. He never quite distinguishes between the cause of initial decisions to intervene and what accounts for increased commitments of resources once intervention is under way.

The Vietnam case study is illuminating. Sunk costs, both institutional and personal, may propel bureaucracies into spending still more in order to justify the initial outlays. "In Vietnam," Barnet writes, "the US intervention steadily deepened in the 1950's as US officials tried to protect earlier investments. These investments included not only the vast sums of prior years but also their personal reputations." The momentum generated by prior commitments, however, fails to explain how involvement got rolling in the first place.

Barnet, moreover, characterizes the Vietnam intervention as "a series of quantum jumps." The discreteness that "quantum jumps" implies might suggest the inappropriateness of the "bureaucratic momentum" metaphor as an explanation of some decisions leading to deeper immersion in the quagmire. For instance, to consider the July 1965 decision dispatching 100,000 troops to Vietnam as the product of bureaucratic momentum in the same sense as was the November 1963 decision broadening

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ike's commitment to the Diem regime to include all succeeding Saigon governments is to ignore the distinctiveness of the later decision. Although logistical preparations for a large-scale build-up had been set in motion in February 1965, the July decision constituted a major shift in the course of American policy, and the disunity of the President's advisers and subsequent resignations indicate that Washington regarded the change as significant.

IF THE VESTED interests of the bureaucracy account for gradual escalation, the value preferences of bureaucrats are crucial for understanding the decision to intervene and the "quantum jumps" in the scale of involvement that followed. Contrasting the *Weltanschauung* of the Revolutionary with that of the National-Security Manager, Mr. Barnet cites essential premises that underlie the latter's predisposition to intervene: first, that America has a responsibility to police the world; second, that insurgent movements are fomented and/or supported by "international communism" and thus are antagonistic to America's "national interest"; and third, that these movements tend to be violent, and that violence is per se undesirable. He writes,

> If, as the National-Security Managers see it, the inevitable involvement of international communism is the key factor that makes US intervention against revolutions ultimately necessary for national survival, the use of violence by the insurgents is the key factor that makes it legally justifiable and morally right.

More than that, violence contradicts the Managers' "urge to achieve stability and control over the world environment." In a theme resonant with Galbraith's analysis of the market behavior of private bureaucracies, Mr. Barnet argues that this urge is "probably inherent in the hierarchical character of the foreign-policy bureaucracy." Unfortunately, he fails to elaborate this point.

Analysis of bureaucracy provides considerable insight into the reasons for America's most recent policy failure. As time passed, for instance, Washington's policies became more and more remote from Vietnam's realities. This may have been due to the tendency of officials to push those policies their organizations were accustomed to executing rather than those policies the war demanded. During the summer of 1964 various policy alternatives percolated up through bureaucratic channels. The Defense Department was divided along predictable lines: the Air Force advocated precision bombing of the "Ho Chi Minh Trail"; the Navy proposed a "quarantine" of the harbor at Haiphong, and the Army, a large-scale "search-and-destroy" operation in the South. To define the war as insurgency rather than as aggression from the North would have implied rejection of these three conventional-war strategies; hence the theory of aggression was bolstered.

Furthermore, what made peace talks all the more improbable the next February was that the State Department, which might have been expected to favor negotiations by virtue of its institutional role, instead housed advocates of a counterinsurgency strategy. Predictably, Defense won the fight over military strategy for Vietnam, and the fact that none of the national-security bureaucracies had a vested interest in peace is hardly a reassuring thought.

Reviewing the ideology of the National-Security Managers, Mr. Barnet offers a trenchant critique of their policy premises that they might do well to read. He evaluates unilateral interventionism not only from a "world order" perspective, but also from the more restricted outlook of the "national security" espoused by the Managers themselves. He concludes that "from the standpoint of a President of the United States thinking about reelection, concerned with solving domestic problems and assuring himself a decent place in history, unilateralism is proving to be a disastrous policy."

For officials who consider a "can-do" mentality and acceptance of novel gimmickry a valid response to the complexity of the social environment, a message of skepticism emerges from *Intervention and Revolution*:

> It is not only that the national-security bureaucracy lacks the power to make revolutionary developments around the world conform to an American model, although this is true, but that it lacks the wisdom to play God to other societies. . . . Perhaps revolution in the end will turn out to be worse than starvation bred of economic and social stagnation. Perhaps revolution in some places will mean repression *and* starvation. But these are judgments which US officials sitting in Washington have neither the capacity nor the right to make for others.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Joseph Clark

Martyrs of Yesterday

THE MOONEY CASE, *by* Richard H. Frost. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 495 pp. $12.50.

IT TAKES very little effort to get an argument going between generations about progress. Has there been any in the last couple of generations? Is this really the worst of all possible worlds at the worst of all possible times?

Here is a book with weighty evidence that says things do change, and sometimes for the better. To cite a juridical example, it might come as a surprise that only in recent times was the principle accepted that convictions resulting from perjured evidence are faulty and should be thrown out. Such convictions have been upheld in the past and those of Tom Mooney and Warren Billings were notorious examples.*

The long and arduous fight to free the two labor militants finally succeeded and also vindicated a principle. That principle was stated by Associated Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart in a recent decision:

> More than 30 years ago this Court held that the Fourteenth Amendment cannot tolerate a state criminal conviction obtained by the knowing use of false evidence. There has been no deviation from that established principle. There can be no retreat from that principle here.

Justice Stewart was referring to the Court's 1935 decision in *Mooney v. Holohan*. That decision came after the interminable efforts of Mooney's defenders to obtain evidence (which they did obtain) that the prosecution's witnesses lied on the witness stand and that the California prosecutors knew they lied; nay, more, not only knew they lied, but the prosecutors Fickert and Cunha conspired to suborn the testimony at the trials of Mooney and Billings. How many long years of imprisonment were endured until Justice Hughes, speaking for the Supreme Court in 1935, sternly admonished the California Supreme Court that an issue of justice was involved. The conservative Justice who rose to the defense of civil liberty spoke quietly, but the words were thunderous support "of the requirement of due process":

> That requirement [Justice Hughes said] in safe-guarding the liberty of the citizen against deprivation through the action of the State, embodies the fundamental conceptions of justice which lie at the base of our civil and political institutions. . . . It is a requirement that cannot be deemed to be satisfied by mere notice and hearing if a State has contrived a conviction through the pretense of a trial which in truth is but used as a means of depriving a defendant of liberty through a deliberate deception of court and jury by the presentation of testimony known to be perjured.

But the bitterness of "the oppressor's wrong" and "the law's delay" was suffered for four more years before Governor Olson began his Administration in January 1939 with the pardon and release of Tom Mooney. Billings had to wait ten months longer before he gained freedom.

One of the many virtues of this book is that in presenting an exhaustive history of the Mooney case it also delineates the central actors. And these, Mooney in the first place, are presented as rounded human beings, with their weaknesses as well as their strengths. Mooney himself was complex, a difficult man, often a trial to his friends, including the wife he put aside after the long fight was ended in victory. One of the most revealing sections of this book gives much of the verbatim text of the first interrogation of Mooney after he was arrested in 1916 following the bombing of the San Francisco Preparedness Day parade. Speaking of the law's delay, it wasn't till 19 years after the arrest that the police stenogra-

* To older generations of radicals the Mooney story was told a thousand times . . . A bomb exploded at a Preparedness Day parade in San Francisco on July 22, 1916, and 10 people were killed, 40 wounded by the blast. Then came the arrest of Warren Billings, labor activist; the arrest of Israel Weinberg, jitney driver; and the arrest of Ed Nolan, machinist union organizer; then the arrests of Tom Mooney, union militant, and of his wife Rena. Weinberg and Mrs. Mooney were acquitted, charges were dropped against Nolan, but Mooney and Billings were convicted, with Mooney sentenced to hang and Billings to life imprisonment. There were demonstrations for Mooney in Russia, and President Wilson appealed to the California authorities to commute the death sentence. For 23 years Mooney and Billings were in jail, while an unending fight went on for their freedom.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pher's record of the interrogation was made public as a result of the defense's efforts!

Mooney is here revealed as a man of extraordinary courage, intelligence, and principle. The cops and prosecutors were depriving him of his constitutional rights and trying to get him to implicate Billings and his other comrades. Mooney was not only steadfast in confounding his tormentors but prescient in defense of his constitutional rights. At the very outset Brennan, who prosecuted Billings, demanded from Mooney: "How long have you known Billings?" and Mooney replied: "I insist that I have the right to counsel. There is [no] fair-minded, honest, liberty-loving man that can deny me that right." After much exchange about the dastardly bombing, with Mooney agreeing it was "the most heinous crime," he tells the prosecutors, "I am only a working man and there are many tricks in this game and I want my rights all safe-guarded, and I realize they cannot be safe-guarded under these circumstances. . . ."

The California Supreme Court, bastion of disregard for civil liberties during the Mooney case, has changed with the press of the fight. Today it has become a model in many respects. As the author of *The Mooney Case* indicates, the California Court preceded the Warren Court in barring use of evidence secured through illegal search and seizure, and it also established the principle of "criminal discovery"—the sharing of information by both sides before a trial. Today a California defendant has the right to know in advance who are the prosecution witnesses and to examine documents that will be used against him. Above all, the Mooney Case expanded the protection of the writ of *habeas corpus*, especially through the Supreme Court ruling of 1935.

THERE IS A CLASS STRUGGLE, even in America. In many ways, the Mooney case originated in the conflict between employer groups and labor unions in San Francisco. Frost turns up a report by the U.S. District Attorney in San Francisco who, at the very outset of the case, reported to his superiors in Washington: "The truth of this bomb situation here is that it was taken up by the Law and Order Committee of the Chamber of Commerce as a chance to suppress the Unions, and the Unions evidently took up Mooney's side of it in order to countermove against the action of the Chamber of Commerce. In other words, it has become a bitter industrial struggle."

But a curious aspect of this fight, as of almost every other struggle against injustice, is that there are invariably the little old (or young) wealthy ladies who devote themselves with all their strength to a vindication of the right. As to the fight itself Frost makes an objective estimate of those who contributed to this long and often heart-breaking struggle. Legal measures went hand-in-hand with publicity and mass movements to arouse public sympathy. Who gets the credit for the good fight? The Anarchists credited Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman, the Communists, Robert Minor, the Irish, Bourke Cockran, the liberals, Fremont Older, trade unionists, Samuel Gompers and Edward Nockels. And Frost makes the sound judgment: "Without the help of all of them and others as well, Mooney and Billings probably would have gone the way of Parsons and Spies, of Sacco and Vanzetti."

"If people would only read," Marx is supposed to have once said. If those who are certain that we live in the worst of times would read this book they might have cause for reflection on the nature of the struggle for justice that has been going on so long, and often with some results. But one reason, perhaps, that too many people will not read it is the forbidding bulk, not to speak of the high cost of the volume. The book originated in what was clearly an extraordinarily good Ph.D. dissertation. But a superior dissertation does not always make the most readable book. It might have been a service if author and publisher had produced a volume smaller by half, with some of the detail absent, but still with Frost's cogent, remarkably lucid presentation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

A Friend

Editors:

Every time a copy of DISSENT arrives at our desk we feel thrilled. All of us are so eager to go through it.

It is a pity that such a fine venture has to ask for funds. Or, perhaps its excellence is the cause of its financial stringency.

It would have been our privilege to have returned the pledge card, but for our country's severe restriction on remittance of money in foreign currency. Morally we are with you.

RAM SINGH, EDITOR
THOUGHT
A Weekly of Politics & the Arts
Delhi

On Dwight Macdonald

The following letter was sent to but not printed by the New York Review of Books.

To the Editor:

It pains me to take issue with Dwight Macdonald for whom I have a great deal of admiration and to whom, moreover, I owe a deep debt of gratitude for having been my first guide to the American intellectual scene. But his *Open Letter to Michael Harrington* exhibits so scandalous a departure from the ethics of controversy that I feel compelled to speak out.

I am not concerned here with the issue at stake but solely with the fact that Macdonald chooses to quote at length from private telephone conversations with Harrington in order to make his point. This, I submit, is not only a serious breach of journalistic ethics but a procedure that undermines all civilized intercourse.

When private opinions privately expressed are dragged into public print, this undermines that basic trust among people without which there can be no moral community. By violating one of the essential requirements of mutual respect among men of good will Macdonald has ill served the cause of democracy and liberal comity to which he is otherwise so deeply devoted.

LEWIS COSER
Stanford, California
November 26, 1968

Correction

I sincerely regret having repeated a piece of misinformation which I picked up in another magazine. I wrote in DISSENT, November-December 1968, that Professor A. J. P. Taylor belonged to the notorious Cliveden set, which was responsible for the appeasement policies of the thirties and hence for the Second World War. Now Professor Taylor writes in the *New York Review of Books* that he never belonged to, but in fact "often denounced," this group. I must take his word for the latter assertion, though as a contemporary I was not aware, in the thirties, that he was denouncing Chamberlain as loudly as he now does his successors. I also regret that Professor Taylor has not answered my charges in the columns of DISSENT, as he and the editors of the *New York Review of Books* were invited to do, but chose to pick a minor point and to counterattack in another magazine.

The major issue is whether A. J. P. Taylor's "explanation" of Hitler's policies amounted to an apology, or to be specific: whether in the opinion of Taylor, as in that of the Cliveden set indeed, British statesmen were justified in meeting Hitler's acts with the same methods as the acts of, say, Stresemann. Professor Taylor has embraced the latter view explicitly on p. 424 of his *English History 1914–1945* (Oxford University Press, 1965), and also in his *Origins of the Second World War* of 1961, polemicizing against Churchill and discarding the Hossbach Memorandum and other evidence brought out at the Nuremberg trials. The issue is whether it was both more humane and more political to let Hitler conquer a few more countries, and Professor Taylor has affirmed this position in his more recent papers in the *New York Review of Books.*

I apologize for the conclusion I drew from his writings.

H. PACHTER

DISSENT

HAVE YOU MOVED?

•

Send both old and new address to:
DISSENT: 509 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10017

•

Allow three weeks
for change to become effective

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HELP FOR
Prisoners of Conscience

Victims of governments which persecute dissenters are the concern of Amnesty International. The organization campaigns for the release of people everywhere in the world imprisoned merely for their religious or political beliefs. Amnesty fights for no ideology or sect, but for the simple human right to believe, to express, to advocate or to dissent.

Amnesty affiliates in 25 countries work for the release of thousands of prisoners—the famous and the friendless. About 2,000 prisoners of conscience for whom Amnesty undertook campaigns have been released. Amnesty holds consultative status with both the Council of Europe and the United Nations. Amnesty cases include:

MARIO SOARES (Portugal) a democratic Socialist lawyer outspokenly opposed to dictatorial policies of Salazar regime. Exiled in March, 1968, no charges, no trial, no appeal. Amnesty International launched broad appeal. Soares released in fall, 1968.

WOLE SOYINKA (Nigeria) regarded by many as Africa's finest playwright, imprisoned for advocating end to bloody civil war in his country. Responding to his appeal for help, Amnesty helps to keep world aware of his continued imprisonment.

MIHAJLO MIHAJLOV (Yugoslavia) was sentenced to 4½ years in prison for trying to establish independent non-Communist magazine. Amnesty is hard at work to help Mihajlov.

NINA KARSOW (Poland) who lost her parents in Treblinka during World War II, was imprisoned for possession of a petition for amnesty for political prisoners and other papers. Named Amnesty's "Prisoner of the Year," she was released in 1968.

AMNESTY NEEDS YOUR HELP

American sponsors of Amnesty include Victor Reuther, Roger Baldwin, Francis Rivers, Theo. Bikel, Michael Straight, Reps. Don Edwards, and Wm. F. Ryan, Sen. Jacob Javits, Jules Feiffer, Nat Hentoff, Maurice Goldbloom, Marietta Tree and others. International associates include Pablo Casals, Gunnar Myrdal, Alan Paton, Danilo Dolci, Sean MacBride. *Join them in support of Amnesty's worldwide struggle to protect freedom of expression and belief.*

AMNESTY International of U.S.A., 1346 Conn. Ave., Washington, D.C.

I would like to join. My contribution is enclosed as indicated:

——Contributing member $25

——Husband and wife 15

——Regular member 10

——Student member 2

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State .....

All members receive monthly bulletin.
Contributions tax-deductible.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

League for Industrial Democracy

112 East 19th Street, New York, N. Y. 10003 / ALgonquin 4-5865

"Education for Increasing Democracy in Our Economic, Political and Cultural Life" *Founded 1905*

From Norman Thomas

June, 1968

Dear Friend:

From time to time you have received mailings from the LID describing our work, announcing our publications, requesting support of our student-labor institutes, and inviting you to participate in our popular public forums in New York City.

Your response has indicated that you share the goals and support the program of the League. Perhaps you have intended to join the LID but let it slip your mind. I am appealing to you to become a member of this important organization today.

For a $10.00 membership you will receive a complimentary copy of Michael Harrington's new book, *Toward a Democratic Left*. I am much impressed by this book, which puts forth a sound program for building "a new radical majority" in the United States. I want to recommend it to every man and woman who seeks constructive, democratic, non-violent solutions to the problems of our revolutionary times.

Your membership also brings you all LID publications as they come off the press and a subscription to *Dissent* magazine.

I feel that in 1968 it is even more crucial than ever before for those of us on the democratic Left to help build and strengthen our institutions and organizations.

I hope I can count on you.

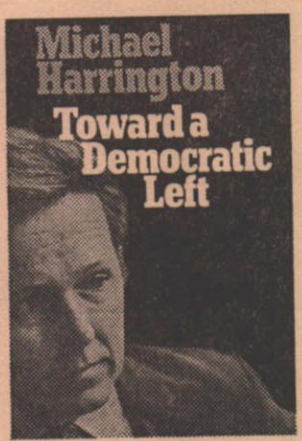
Sincerely,

Norman Thomas

Norman Thomas
Executive Director Emeritus

NT:gdg
opeiu 153 afl-cio

P.S. If you wish to purchase a copy of *Toward a Democratic Left*, it is available through the League for $4.95 -- a saving of $1.00.



LEAGUE FOR INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY
112 E. 19 Street, New York, N. Y. 10003

☐ Enclosed please find $10 for a membership in the LID and a complimentary copy of **Toward A Democratic Left** by Michael Harrington.

☐ Enclosed please find $.... for .... copy(ies) of **Toward A Democratic Left.** ($4.95 per copy.)

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State ..... Zip .....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED